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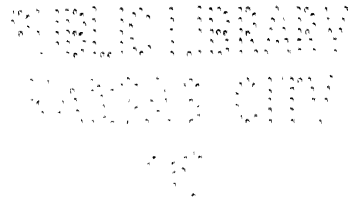
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VICHY

Two Years of Deception

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VICHY

Two Years of Deception

BY

LÉON MARCHAL

NEW YORK

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

1943

VIRGIL CLAR
VTO BARKER
ON

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Foreword

I owe a brief personal explanation to my readers.

In June, 1940, I was stationed in Morocco. Like the overwhelming majority of Frenchmen in North Africa, I was opposed to the armistice and to the breaking of our alliances. As they did, I refused to concede that a capitulation manifestly contrary to the will of the French people could put an end to the state of war between France and Germany. With this in mind, four months later, I personally opened the first negotiations for the supplying of North Africa. By maintaining economic relations with the free world I, among others, hoped that a barrier could be erected against German penetration in the French Empire, thus preparing the way for the French overseas territories to break with Vichy and reenter the war.

From April, 1941, to April, 1942, in my new functions as Counsellor to the French Embassy in Washington, I pursued the same policy for as long as it could reasonably counteract the development of Franco-German collaboration and maintain the spirit of resistance in North Africa. During that time I dealt only with matters pertaining to North Africa, and was not connected with any other activity of the Vichy representation.

After Pierre Laval's return to power, I openly joined General de Gaulle.

It was then—in answer to a suggestion made by The Macmillan Company of New York—that I decided to write on the Vichy regime and the fatal evolution which led it, from concession to concession, to the last stage of enslavement.

In carrying out this task, I have endeavored to attain the

same accuracy and objectivity as in my professional work for the French Foreign Service.

I have made use of all the available and significant sources of information except, however, official documents with which I could not have become acquainted in any way but for my diplomatic position. I can assure my readers, nevertheless, that the documents I refrained from using do not contain, to my knowledge, any elements which might be invoked to attenuate the responsibility of the men of Vichy.

I am indebted to numerous friends for first-hand accounts and reports—which, I regret to say, I have often been unable to credit specifically. Some of my informants or members of their families are still in France, and I have no right to expose them to reprisals.

Reports of United States correspondents in Europe have often been of great aid and I wish to express my admiration for the care and the precision with which, despite extreme difficulties, they inform the public of the United States on what is taking place in France.

During my stay in London last July, I was able to gather first-hand information on conditions in the Occupied Zone and the internal resistance of the French people.

I have used all this documentation, coming from the most varied sources, with complete independence of judgment and expression. This book has undergone no censorship and bears no imprimatur. Fighting France knows the price of freedom of thought. It is what we are fighting for.

The original text was written in French. The English translation is the work of MM. Jean Davidson and Don Schwind. I wish to state here that they have been, for me, more than translators: I have found in them real collaborators and friends. If this book succeeds in giving an exact picture of what has taken place in France for the past two years, it will be through their efforts as well as the writer's.

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VICHY

Two Years of Deception

I

June 25, 1940

To die is not what matters, but to win the war.

—MARSHAL FOCH

Since one o'clock this morning Franco-German and Franco-Italian armistice conventions have been in force. The struggle has ceased from Bordeaux to the Alps and the remnants of the French Army are still falling back. At full speed the mechanized divisions of the invader are still thrusting forward and there will arise in several days a steel curtain to cut France in two—the Demarcation Line.

The Bordeaux Government (a name that recalls for the Frenchman the tragic hours of January, 1871, and those of August, 1914) has proclaimed a national day of mourning. In the provinces which have been spared the invasion, in North Africa, and deep within the most distant lands of the Empire, flags have been dipped to half-mast over the public buildings, and funeral ceremonies are celebrated in the churches.

In Rabat, capital of French Morocco, on that African ground which has nourished the youngest glories of France and the greatest hopes of her army, civil and military officials stand within the cathedral, pressing into the first ranks of the assembly. The altar is draped in black. A catafalque arises below the choir in the dim light of tapers; the tricolor that covers it is veiled in crape.

One cannot help remembering, despite himself, other ceremonies of this kind, in this place, which brought together the same people each November 11 in remembrance of the dead who fell in another war—a victorious war. It is the same cathedral of Rabat, but the feelings that make the hearts within it

pound are very different. The liturgy for the dead rises beneath the dome. The words of the "Dies Irae"—on the day of wrath and trembling when the earth crumbles into dust—have taken on a new meaning. This day is the Day of Judgment.

The high dignitaries of the Sultan's court, viziers and pashas, come as though to the funeral of a friend. They are silent and dignified. No word passes. Their sympathy and their loyalty are beyond question; of these they have, in the last days, given the most moving proof.

What are they dreaming beneath the great white veils that envelop them?

One thing they must know. In a few weeks or a few months, the Frenchman will yield the land to a new conqueror, a rapacious and hard master. The German, who coveted Morocco even before August, 1914, is no stranger to them. The Grand Vizier, Si El Hadj Mohamed El Mokri, this venerable old man who has served four Sultans and whose exact age nobody knows, may well recall that day in March, 1905, when Kaiser Wilhelm II nearly set fire to Europe by disembarking at Tangier in the dazzling uniform of His Imperial Majesty's White Cuirassiers to declare that Germany would protect Morocco against the intrigues of the French and English. The menace of Germany's domination, pitiless to the so-called "inferior races," arises once more, just when it was believed definitely eliminated.

Sages of Islam turn to the words of the Koran: "It is written." God who gives the victory smashes one by one the rulers who do not belong to the true Faith, the unworthy vessels in which He chooses to test His own people. God is the Highest. He is the most Learned. Let His will be done.

The sentiments of the Frenchman are not very different from the fatalism of the Moslem. Here in Morocco, with only the official communiqués which hide or restrict the truth, it has been far from easy to follow the fortunes of battle. Up to the very last illusions have lingered.

But the awaited miracle has not occurred as in September, 1914. Neither on the Somme, nor on the Marne, nor on the Seine, nor on the Loire. Stubborn hopes have sprung up again and again on the rivers of France; but hopes deceive, and now everything collapses. Now, these men who, for the most part, fought the other war, who were victorious in their youth, must contemplate from this moment the prospect of ending their days under the yoke. Their shoulders stir as if beneath a too heavy burden, and eyes drowned with tears look without seeing. Every man knows that the days of glory are over, that this ceremony of mourning begins a long time of suffering and humiliation. To be silent in submission alone remains.

Eyes turn toward the Consul General of Great Britain, L. H. Hurst, who stands erect in the first row. He is still our best friend, isn't he? His country is going on with the war, yes? With the help and—who knows?—the intervention of the United States, our allies will, perhaps, win the war in the end.

But every man knows that resistance has ceased everywhere—even in Africa which as late as yesterday fairly trembled with pride at the thought of fighting for the life of the mother country.

The ceremony is finished and the chants have ceased. The bishop and the priests withdraw. The altar boys snuff out the candles and a dim cloud of incense wavers above the darkening nave. The crowd thins. Outside, on the parvis, little knots of men gather—but not for long. For there is nothing to say.

But inside each house, in the silence, the somber bitterness of mourning will go on. Many a man will think of the little bit of France where his youthful years flowed happily. Now, invasion stains two-thirds of the land of France and the other third shelters millions of refugees cast haphazard upon the roads.

Where are parents? Where are friends? Which have been marked by death? Who has fallen alive into the hands of the

enemy? There are no answers to these questions yet and a man must wait, perhaps for weeks, before he learns the exact kind of sorrow which is to be his lot in the nation's disaster.

After all, I am a good deal happier than many because my old parents are here beside me. The Germans were an hour away when they left their home on June 8. They reached Morocco the very morning the armistice of Compiègne was signed, and now they have found what they perhaps cherish most, their four grandchildren, supreme hope of those who are too old to see a return to radiant days.

In seventy years our Lorraine soil has three times suffered the German invasion. Thrice in one lifetime is too much.

For these older people, Morocco is a calm retreat with its blazing sun and flowers. But they think mostly of the final collapse of all they have cherished, of all they have hoped for, of all they have worked all their lives for. The question facing all of us now is: Who will restore to them and to the French people confidence in their destiny?

Today, Marshal Pétain addressed the French people in his fourth message of the past week. To justify the terms of the armistice, this old man revealed for the first time the full extent of the defeat.

“Armed resistance had to cease,” he said. “The Government was forced into either of these two decisions: remain on the spot, or take to the high seas. It has pondered this and has resolved to stay in France to maintain the unity of our people and to represent them in the face of the enemy.” He then continued, in a grave voice which trembled slightly, because it was that of an old man expressing with force a fateful choice: “The armistice is concluded; the struggle has ended. . . . The conditions to which we had to submit are severe. . . . But at least our honor is saved. . . . The Government remains free, and France will be administered only by Frenchmen . . . I should not deserve to remain at your head had I volunteered to spill French blood in order to prolong the dream of a few

Frenchmen, ill advised on the conditions of the battle. I have not wanted to place elsewhere than on French soil either my person or my hopes." We are disappointed and cannot understand. The soil of Africa, the soil of Lyautey, of Gouraud, of Mangin, is a French soil, the most youthful, the most fervent, the most martial of all French lands. Defeat is unknown to her. So the Marshal would have been on French earth still had he journeyed here to lead those who would continue to fight.

I remember how his voice grew more and more severe, nearly hard: "It is toward the future we must, from now on, direct our efforts. A *new order* is starting. . . . You have suffered. . . . You have yet to suffer. . . . Your life will be hard. . . . We must restore France. . . . Our defeat was born of our laxity. . . . It is to an intellectual and moral recovery that I first invite you. Frenchmen, you will achieve this great work and you will see, I swear, a new France spring from your fervor."

That was all. Nothing but the advice to wait and be resigned. Not one word to encourage the weakest, most distant, hope of deliverance. The words of the Marshal were followed by the fanfares of the Marseillaise. This song of past glory sounded strange on such a day. There was no question of rushing for arms and forming battalions. They should have spared us this bitter derision.

The armistice conventions prescribe that, "until further notice," French radio transmitters must cease their broadcasts. The voices of France have vanished.

For us who have seen neither battle nor its mass of refugees jammed upon the roads, for us who still live in a secure country where human beings and things have kept their familiar aspect, this silence of itself carries the invasion to the very limits of the Empire.

By the armistice, it was hoped to save overseas France; but she was already in the German net the moment she could no longer express herself. We are entering a new world this day,

a world in which Hitler's malevolent power will be exercised over us by means more dangerous because more subtle and obscure. We can now glimpse the most pernicious consequences of the defeat. Has this been sufficiently considered?

As for me, I know we are in danger of losing, not only our lives, but also our souls to a man who has veiled neither his hatred for us nor his will to crush France.

I have here my copy of "Mein Kampf," bought in the early days of the Nazi regime, when I was in Munich. Opening it, I can hear again the acclamations of the crowd, the endless mad shouts of "Sieg Heil," the long brown columns parading at a rapid pace before a little man who saluted them with outstretched arm. The French knew by their newspapers and by their movies these pictures of a military revolution, of a revolution which prepared a war.

But they have not understood sufficiently what menace lay in them because few Frenchmen have had the opportunity of reading the full text of "Mein Kampf." Shortly before his death, Marshal Lyautey, "the great African," warned: "Every Frenchman must know this book; it involves his security, his liberty, and his life."

Yet there were judges in France who forbade, with a narrow application of the law—and at the request of Hitler's publisher—the sale of the only complete and textual French translation of the book.

On the eve of the war, however, a little volume emerged called "Explanations on Mein Kampf." It was published by one of the leaders of the fifth column, Jacques Benoist-Méchin, later to become the collaborator of Admiral Darlan and Pierre Laval, and was a highly selective collection of short excerpts whose sole purpose appeared to be the seduction of French opinion.

It is conceivable that a handful of naïve Frenchmen may have been deceived by the publication; but the leaders of the

French should have seen its purpose. That they did not know—or, if they did know, that they did nothing about it—is unforgivable. I take a single passage, chosen from a hundred others, each heavy-laden with the same dark threatening. Reading it again, two years after the debacle, I can scarcely believe that the Bordeaux Government would have accepted the armistice had its members spent an hour—I repeat, a single hour—in the careful weighing of these lines: “A people which lays down its arms chooses to bear all the resulting humiliations and exactions rather than modify its fate by resorting to arms anew. . . . A clever victor will dictate conditions to the vanquished only one at a time. . . . A people whose will is gone—and that is exactly the case with any people which accepts capitulation—will never find in a single repressive measure sufficient reasons to pick up its weapons again. The more exigencies one submits to without reacting, the more difficult it appears to be to react to each new demand, different from the preceding request in appearance, but really destined to recur incessantly; especially when one has already withstood in silence and with resignation increasingly numerous and greater hardships.” ✓

And Hitler concludes, citing the military expert Clausewitz: “The stain of a cowardly capitulation can never be erased. This drop of poison in the bloodstream of a people is transmitted to posterity. It paralyzes and saps the vitality of the generations to come.”

By reading this page of “*Mein Kampf*,” one can foresee the successive stages of the capitulation, the slow and certain progress of enslavement.

Is there no fate for the Frenchman to look forward to but, on the one hand, the resignation which Marshal Pétain preaches and, on the other, the humiliating slavery that Hitler is forging for us? Isn’t resistance still possible under many forms?

During the six weeks of the battle of France, Frenchmen

anxiously listened at their radios each evening, hoping for some fragment of favorable news, seeking some more or less illusory reason to hope.

French stations have been condemned to silence, but there still exist, here and there in the world, free men who can express themselves. There is still England—and America.

On the London radio there rings the voice of a soldier, of a chief who refuses to despair. Those who heard that voice in June, 1940, will never forget the resolution, the assurance it carried. From England, where he arrived June 18 from Bordeaux, General Charles de Gaulle addressed the French each evening. He told them that the war was not over, and that France must stay in the fight side by side with the British Empire till final victory. At that time, little was known of De Gaulle except that, long before 1939, he had made himself, in the face of a High Command addicted to routine and a Parliament torn by petty quibbles, the apostle of the very same modern combat methods the Germans had used against us with success.

The feeling in Morocco, and I think throughout the French Empire, can be summed up thus: "If we had listened to De Gaulle, we should have won the war."

Now we can see that it is true. Two and a half million Frenchmen equipped with machine guns and light cannon like those of 1918, badly supported by isolated tanks and skeletal aviation, have been routed by eleven armored divisions and five thousand airplanes.

The enemy in this war imposed upon us the type of warfare in which we should have excelled had we been prepared. It alone could have given us the victory by opposing matériel and maneuverability to numerical superiority.

In all the army one man alone had been able to see aright. That man was De Gaulle. He was right then. Is he not still right today?

The voice of De Gaulle is clear and confident:

"Must hope disappear? Is our defeat irrevocable? No! I tell you that nothing is lost for France. The same means which have defeated us can one day bring us victory. . . . France is not alone. She has an immense empire behind her.

"She can form a compact bloc with the British Empire which has mastery of the seas and continues the struggle. She can, as England is doing, use without limitation the vast industrial power of the United States. This war does not limit itself to the hapless soil of our nation. This war has not ended with the battle of France. This is a world war.

"All the mistakes, all the sufferings, do not preclude the existence in the world of all the means needed to one day crush our enemies.

"Swept away today by mechanized might, we can triumph in the future through superior mechanized might. This is the destiny of the world."

And again:

"Come what may, the flame of French resistance must not die and will not die. . . . To the Frenchman who bears arms belongs the duty of prolonging resistance. . . . Soldiers of France, wherever you may be, stand erect! Honor, common sense, the interest of the nation command all free Frenchmen to carry on the battle wherever they find themselves and with whatever means they have. . . .

"I urge all Frenchmen who would remain free to hear me and follow me. . . . Hope there must be. Somewhere there must shine and burn the flame of French resistance. One day, I promise you, the French Army of the élite, the mechanized army of land, sea, and air, together with our allies, will restore liberty to the world and grandeur to our country."

Through the London radio these messages were repeated hour by hour for several days and there began to crystallize this formula: "France has lost a battle; she has not lost the war."

And so hope is restored to us. But is it a reasonable hope? Frenchmen are wondering throughout the Empire. Where is the truth? What is a man's duty?

On one side there is a man, heavy in years and honor, the hero of Verdun, the pacifier of Morocco. Yesterday, the name of Marshal Pétain was a synonym for victory. Can he be mistaken today when he tells the Frenchman that everything is over, that the defeat is complete, the war lost, and resistance useless?

His words carry the accent of moderation and wisdom to which we, in France, have always been highly sensitive. The peasant knows, through experience, that when hailstorms have devastated the field and ruined the harvest there is nothing to be done but resign oneself and begin working anew. Great words do not attenuate great catastrophes.

On the other hand is the youngest of France's generals. He was obscure, but today he is famous because it is French to hope against hope and not desert the battlefield as long as there remains an appreciable chance to get oneself killed.

This kind of thing has led us to many a disaster in our history, but it has often saved us when everything seemed lost.

✓ Thus, we see two national traditions in conflict: moderation and audacity. ✓ What shall the choice be? There come times in a man's life—and in a nation's life—when reason is unreliable and true wisdom consists in plunging forward into an apparently foolish enterprise.

A few short weeks after the armistice, Marshal Pétain was to tell us that patience was for us the most necessary form of courage. This is certainly true for men crushed beneath despair. But, at the same time, it is also true that there is no real courage where the will to look at things clearly is lacking. The first form of courage, the highest and most indispensable, is the courage of clear-sightedness, seeing straight, looking squarely at facts, men, and ideas.

Frenchmen of good will have tried to do this as they moved along the long curve of two years that leads downward from capitulation under Pétain to slavery under Laval.

The opposition of moderation and audacity was only a surface opposition. Beneath that surface bravery and common sense joined to show that Adolf Hitler's totalitarian war permits only grim alternatives: total victory or total defeat.

II

Pétain

For whosoever will save his life shall lose it.

ST. LUKE 9:24

To grasp the full significance of the acts of Marshal Pétain in June, 1940, and since, it is well to remember that, for several years before the war, he was already contemplating that he might sooner or later be called upon to take a hand in the political destinies of France. He was convinced that, through his prestige as a victorious soldier, he was the only man who could make the nation accept the reforms he felt were necessary.

Marshal Pétain had long since been passing severe judgment on democratic institutions and their operation. The 1918 victory (largely his own work) should have guaranteed to France a long period of peace and prosperity. But the fruits of this victory, bought at the price of so much blood, had been dissipated through bad management of the affairs of the state. The work of the soldiers had been lost at the hands of the politicians. By 1933, at Hitler's advent to power, a new menace faced the French people in the east, and we confronted it torn apart by dissensions and demoralized by complacency and the easy life. Such were Marshal Pétain's views. He has expressed these views so often in the past two years that, to grasp them best, one must refer to his own words. On June 20, 1940, as the French plenipotentiaries arrived in the Compiègne forest to conclude the armistice, the chief of the Bordeaux Government, keeping silent on the military causes of the defeat, blamed our miseries solely on moral causes: "Since our victory, the spirit of enjoyment has overmastered the spirit of sacrifice. People have asked too much and given too little. People have wanted to spare their efforts and, today, we are confronted by hard times."

Five days later, with the armistice just concluded, he said: "Our defeat has sprung from our laxity. The spirit of enjoyment has destroyed what the spirit of sacrifice erected."

On June 11, he linked in the same condemnation the parties from Left to Right: "International capitalism and international socialism, which, equally, have exploited and debased French labor, belong to prewar days. It is all the more disastrous that, opposing each other in appearance, they spared each other secretly. . . . For our crumbling society, money, too often the servant and instrument of falsehood, was a means of domination."

These were the fundamental themes of most of the speeches and written words of Marshal Pétain for the first months of the Vichy regime. On August 13, 1940, he declared: "During the three-quarters of a century which preceded this war, the political regime to which the French were submitted had as its mainspring the culture of discontent. The rules of the game consisted of stirring up all the sources of irritation, legitimate or illegitimate, to a point where our people, one of the happiest on earth, might believe they were the most miserable. Each party did not hesitate to promise, of course, that France had merely to confide to it the levers of command to see the inferno give way to the most marvelous paradise."

In an article in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, published September 15, 1940, the Marshal denounces "the sterile struggle of parties and factions, this feverish unleashing of personal ambitions or ideological passions, this permanent excitation toward division and hate where a historian could see the most dangerous epidemic that could befall a nation." He adds: "The State, bloated and debilitated, has collapsed more from the weight of its weaknesses and its mistakes than under the blows of the enemy." Nor does he spare his criticism of the laws, economic and social, of the Third Republic: "There was nothing more illogical, more incoherent, more contradictory than the economic regime to which we have, for fifty years and more, owed

an almost chronic agitation, interspersed with violent conflicts, in which the strike and the lockout vied with each other for the honor of having accumulated the greatest heap of ruins. . . . It is a pitiful story, that of the so-called 'social laws' of this period. They have not improved the condition of the working class; they have not altered the capitalist feudality; they have more than half ruined the national economy."

These were the thoughts of Marshal Pétain. They were words he had been expounding to the men around him long before the war.

In 1934, he for the first time assumed political responsibility by participating, as Minister of War, in the Government of Gaston Doumergue. All parties but the Socialist and Communist were represented in this "Cabinet d'Union Nationale," assembled by the former President of the Republic February 9. Three days before, on the 6th, blood flowed in Paris because of the sensations of the Stavisky scandal. Nobody was surprised to see at the head of the army the most glorious soldier of France. But it was a wholly different role which he had the ambition to play. A few months later, after the secession of the Radical Ministers from the "Cabinet d'Union Nationale" puzzled Frenchmen learned that Marshal Pétain had suggested himself to Doumergue in Edouard Herriot's place as Minister of Education.

Why he did this—what he was really thinking about when he did it—can be found in something he wrote in June, 1940: "Among the tasks which impose themselves upon the Government, none is more important than the reform of national education."

And he developed this thought in the following terms: "There exists at the base of our educational system a deep illusion; it is to believe that it is enough to educate the minds in order to form the hearts and temper the characters."

Participation for nearly a year in the Doumergue Ministry left the Marshal with the conviction that the most laudable

intentions are powerless to translate themselves into concrete reforms within the framework of a regime where petty quarreling and reelection are all-absorbing.

From now on, a little knot of people can be seen firmly attaching themselves to the great Marshal of the Victory, some with wild reform projects, others with far more questionable motives.

Along with the dignity of Marshal of France goes the privilege of remaining in active service regardless of age.

Pétain had his staff and his offices in an elegant pavilion within the walls of the Invalides. In his antechambers, hung with paintings of battles recalling the pomp of the imperial wars and the conquest of Algeria, there were the first whisperings of deeds that shaped the dark and bitter latter-day history of the French.

Even at that time, one could find among the familiar figures at "4 bis, Boulevard des Invalides" most of the men the Marshal was to choose after the armistice to assist him in the Government councils or represent him on foreign soil. One, in particular, was Raphaël Alibert, member of the Conseil d'Etat, the highest legal institution in France, and a professor of public law whose files bulged with Constitution projects ceaselessly being completed—and as ceaselessly revised. He was one day to draw the first laws dated from Vichy.

Each time a crisis erupted in the international situation, hopes were expressed, maneuvers outlined, schemes fretted over, in the little coterie sheltered behind the personality of the Defender of Verdun.

In March, 1938, the list of Ministers to compose the Pétain Government circulated openly in Paris. It was distributed to numerous political men by one of the military collaborators closest to the Marshal.

When a copy got to President Daladier's desk, he disciplined the officer involved; but the Marshal denied all knowledge of

the affair and said that his name had been used without his consent.

It appears, in fact, that one of the reasons why Marshal Pétain was designated in the spring of 1939 as Ambassador to the Burgos Government of General Franco was that the Daladier Cabinet was not unhappy to see him leave Paris. In this diplomatic mission the old soldier behaved in partisan fashion. "I am going," said he, "to atone for the sins of the Front Populaire." This statement is quoted directly in the recent biography dedicated to Pétain by his confidant, General Laure. To the Quai d'Orsay's bewilderment, the new Ambassador from the beginning supported Franco's demands against the French Republic. He displayed but slight interest in the protection of the French detained in the Falangist jails. According to him, it was necessary to yield on all points, immediately, without asking for compensations. Such was his infatuation with the authoritarian regime which had crushed the Republican coalition and wished to reinstitute the time-honored traditions of order and hierarchy to which Pétain himself was dedicated. Each time he came back to Paris or met an acquaintance in Biarritz the Marshal's eulogies of the political achievements of the Spanish generals welled forth.

✓The Germans and Italians understood the advantage they could draw from fishing the muddy political waters of Madrid. The city overflowed with Reich agents, and the Marshal was more than once the unsuspecting tool of men who paraded their patriotism when they were French or their love of France when they were foreigners. One of these was a Frenchman who held a controlling position in important Spanish concerns. A few months after the armistice he turned up as Laval's emissary between Paris and Vichy, and it was he who publicly boasted that, in the Madrid days, he once used the Marshal's car and his diplomatic privileges, under the pretext of traveling more easily from Biarritz to San Sebastian, when in truth it was

to evade the financial regulations and take his money out of France. ✓

One must not, however, exaggerate the importance of these intrigues—petty and great—and these pernicious influences which thus involved a man of many years, long experience, and character, one who has always been reputed to know exactly what he wants and very precisely what he does not want. If I mention these intrigues incidentally, it is because Marshal Pétain had found himself linked, whether he would or not, to the closely woven net of the propaganda and ideological warfare of Germany. It explains why he retained for so long a Utopian confidence in the virtues of the National Socialist regime. As unbelievable as this may seem, Pétain eulogized Hitler for having become the protector of religion and for having restored the cult of the family. This he said, at any rate, during the winter of 1939 to a French diplomat, who—in Madrid for a short stay—was literally dumbfounded. This man, who knew the Third Reich well through having lived there without interruption from January, 1933, to August, 1939, described to Marshal Pétain in full detail the persecutions of the Christian churches, brutal sometimes, subtle at other times, the teachings of the German neo-Paganism, methods used to induce children to denounce their own parents, lax morals in the youth camps, and the official encouragement of births among the unmarried. Apparently, Marshal Pétain heard such things then for the first time in his life. These revelations shook his optimism, and he was highly displeased with his visitor for having roughly handled the pleasant idea he cherished of a so-called “National Revolution.” One must concede, moreover—and this is a most important factor—that the positive political concepts of Marshal Pétain for France are fundamentally different from the Hitlerian *Weltanschauung*.

These concepts are well known. The Marshal has strongly expressed them in his speeches and in his writings. He has summed them up in the maxim: “Work—Family—Country.”

They have been the basis for numerous commentaries, official or officious. One of the most significant of these documents is the preamble (*exposé des motifs*) of the constitutional law adopted July 10, 1940, by the National Assembly in Vichy. Says this *exposé*, the authority, above all, of the State must be reinstated in order to liberate France from political, financial, or syndicalist influences. There must exist with the Government a national representation whose nature and the conditions under which it shall operate are not defined. It will merely play "its normal role." Necessary liberties will be guaranteed—provided authority is respected. The courts and the Administration will be reconstructed on "a modern and simple basis." National education and "youth formation" will be among the greatest concerns of the Government, which will favor more births and protect the family. The State will be powerful but will not eliminate the other social groups which existed before it: family, profession, commune, region. It will merely "control and arbitrate them." The economy of the nation will be oriented toward a return to agriculture and the artisan. Hierarchy will be restored everywhere: "A single aristocracy will be recognized, that of intelligence; a single merit, that of work."

In other documents, the Marshal and his followers seek to square themselves with Christian tradition, which he interprets in a passive and narrow way. "One of the great novelties of Christianity," writes Pétain September 15, 1940, "has been to teach man to accept freely the necessity of work and to confer upon the most humble works a spiritual value. We aspire with all our soul to restore this very value which rests, in the final analysis, on respect for the human personality."

This is no summary of "Mein Kampf." Rather, it is an attenuated edition of the Monarchist doctrine of the *Action Française*. On the whole, one easily recognizes in Pétain's sayings theories and formulas that the French conservatives have never ceased to advocate from the middle of the nineteenth century, tenets that a certain other Marshal of France, Mac-Mahon, who

headed the "Moral Order Government," had included in his program (a few years after the 1871 debacle).

There is, however, a difference which must be underlined. The world has changed a great deal in seventy years. Today, words in a political proclamation no longer have the same value they possess in a philosophical or historical work. Ideology has been developed as a means of confusing the mind. Formulas—which seem honest and healthy even to literal-minded men of good will—are the chosen instrument of conquest and oppression.

In one of the most lucid works yet written on the spiritual causes of France's defeat, Jacques Maritain makes a far-ranging observation: "It is a sad thing for the spirit that great ideas and great words, like those of 'hierarchy,' 'right to work,' 'organized economy,' risk being discredited and rendered odious from the way they are employed. . . . When you hear statesmen or journalists criticize the vices of the old liberalism and proclaim that the sense of authority as well as that of liberty is inherent in true democracy, you can ponder over what kind of reservations the word 'but' bears in their phrases. If they say: 'liberty *but* authority,' 'equality *but* hierarchy,' 'justice *but* discipline,' 'fraternity *but* order,' you can know it is probable that, in truth, they detest democracy." It is impossible not to recall this observation when reading Marshal Pétain's messages or the writings they have inspired.

Since Marshal Pétain was so deeply convinced of the necessity of reforming French political institutions, and since he had such definite ideas on the subject, one wonders why he was slow to propose himself as a savior to the country earlier—when, by assuming charge before 1939, he might have spared his country the greatest disaster it ever suffered.

A public declaration by the Defender of Verdun could have, at certain times, started from one end of France to the other a movement which would have carried him to the pinnacle of the state. But to suppose that he could have made such a decla-

ration is to leave out of account the psychology of the leaders of the French Army. Since the ridiculous windmill-jousting of Boulanger in 1887, the fear of being considered a rebellious general has always been, in France, the beginning of wisdom. The mind of the Army officer is the "functionary mind." Deep within himself and in his private conversation he may despise an act of the civilian authority, but never may he adopt outwardly an "undisciplined attitude," much less an "attitude" of revolt. The "functionary mind" is seen in practically all the great administrations which may still bear the mark of their Napoleonic origin. A functionary serves the state. He never meddles in politics. This explains the passivity upon which the Vichy Government fed and continued to feed. Numerous were the officers and functionaries of Vichy who in private life disapproved a policy of collaboration with Germany. But they bent themselves, with more or less readiness, to its execution. They saw, not the honor and the best interests of the country, but men, as the greatest authorities of the State.

Behind everything that Marshal Pétain thought, said, and did in the week during which the Armistice was concluded and in the months that followed, there was his certainty that the defeat would not be bought too dearly—that it might even turn out a good thing—if it permitted the restoration of moral values and traditions that a victorious France had not been able to safeguard. Such a certainty could only, unfortunately, be based on a tragic misunderstanding of the real elements of the military and political situation of the times, in France and out of France. The illusions cherished in Bordeaux at the end of June, 1940, were innumerable. Here are but a few of them:

In the first place, the Marshal and his entourage—especially General Weygand—were absolutely convinced that the war was over, and that nothing could prevent a German victory. Before long, they felt, England would be invaded or must sue for peace. It was all a matter of days—weeks at the most. From a conversation reported by Philippe Barrès in his book on Gen-

eral de Gaulle, Maxime Weygand was sure in Tours on June 13 that Great Britain would be obliged to sign a peace in eight days. Upon his return from the humiliating Compiègne ceremony, General Charles Huntziger is reported to have said to one of the important civilian officials who accompanied him: "If the war is not over before October we are criminals." For his part, Marshal Pétain implied clearly in his June 13 speech that he believed in the early defeat of England: "I understand Mr. Churchill's anguish. He fears for his country the evils which have weighed upon ours for a month." It is also interesting to observe that, in the numerous messages in which he analyzed the impossibility of France's continuing the struggle, Marshal Pétain never made the slightest allusion, however oblique, to the means of resistance in the hands of our allies in Great Britain and overseas: the British fleet, the Royal Air Force, the resources of the Dominions, the economic cooperation of the United States. ✓

People refused to believe that the morale of the British population would hold out under the aerial bombings which menaced them. They imagined, on the contrary, panicky collapse and disorder which would oblige the Churchill Government to cease resistance.

I do not exaggerate. An article by Lucien Bourguès in the *Petit Parisien*, reproduced July 18 by most of the dailies of the Unoccupied Zone and North Africa, said this: "The decisive duel is going to take place; this cannot be doubted. It will be bitterly fought and terrible, because the Germans must complete the conquest of Europe through the destruction of a most powerful foe and the British must save their national and colonial patrimony. Certain rumors have it, however, that the attack against the British Isles would be preceded by some kind of peace ultimatum. Already, on several occasions during this tragic year, people have imagined that the military offensives would be preceded by peace maneuvers but facts have given the lie to these prophecies. It may well be the same again this time.

Once more the war can explode like a thunderbolt in the night. Churchill faces the coming storm and proposes to defend England street by street, house by house, but it is in no way proved that the citizens of Great Britain will let things reach this stage. . . . Churchill would not be followed by British opinion as he was two months ago. . . . The British people are too matter-of-fact and realistic to commit suicide if they can survive under honorable conditions."

Another illusion, just as widespread, was to believe that the collapse of June, 1940, can be compared to other defeats France has suffered in her history and from which she recovered, often in very few years. The words of the Marshal on June 20 show that he cherished this illusion: "The French people do not dispute their setbacks. All peoples have known periods of successes and reverses. It is by the way they react that they show themselves weak or great." On June 23, he also says: "Our army has fought bravely and loyally. Inferior in arms and in numbers, it has been obliged to ask that the combat cease. We are undergoing a hard trial. . . . We have gone through other trials. We know that the country remains intact as long as the love of its children for it subsists."

Weygand had already declared on June 13 at the Council of Ministers in Tours: "Why do you talk to me of 'capitulation'? We are not 'capitulating,' we are beaten." It would seem that, for these technicians of the military art, war is a sort of game in which it is admitted that sometimes you win, sometimes you lose. When you have lost, you pay the price without a murmur like the player of a game—always with the hope of winning another game tomorrow. This was perhaps true of wars where the goals were limited, such as those of the last century—for instance, the wars of Bismarck. But when Hitler tells us, mincing no words, that he wants, on one hand, to settle once and for all Germany's accounts with France and, on the other hand, to establish the domination of the German race over the entire

world, how can one suppose that, after having defeated France, he would grant her the least chance of recovery?

It was just as foolhardy to believe, or make believe, that one could deal with Hitler "as soldier to soldier and in honor." These are words which had a precise meaning for Marshal Pétain who pronounced them, for the French people who heard them. A soldier has but one word. He uses only honest weapons. He fights only the powerful. He spares the weak and does not slash the throat of a beaten opponent. Honor, also, is a synonym of loyalty and generosity. No unfettered mind with a knowledge of history will admit that these definitions can apply to the traditional German concept of the soldier and of honor, much less to the Hitlerian concept.

This can only be interpreted as a base and hopeful flattery addressed to the former corporal of 1918. Not by humiliating themselves can the vanquished arouse compassion in an opponent who has the single resolution—to destroy them.

The lightness with which certain clauses of the armistice conventions had been accepted, clauses which on account of their harshness were to become impossible of enforcement after several weeks, demonstrates conclusively that the men of Bordeaux had got it into their heads that peace could be concluded in very short order. People had very surprising ideas in this respect. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, the banker Paul Baudoin, would have been the most sparkling of our diplomats if diplomacy could, like some types of financial undertakings, be performed with the mirrors of imagination.

They all based their arguments on the principle that England would be forced into capitulation before autumn, leaving Germany master of Europe. Hitler, nevertheless, would not be in a position to dictate peace to the world. He would have to accept international negotiations to regulate the relations of Europe with the British Dominions and the United States. At the conference table, the French delegation would not be in too bad a position. France could count, on one hand, on the sympa-

thy of her former ally who would by no means reproach her for her desertion, since the Franco-German armistice would be followed shortly by an Anglo-German armistice. She would, on the other hand, call upon the traditional friendship of the United States. Even before the opening of peace negotiations, she would have knotted anew her bonds with the Latin countries, Italy, Spain, and Portugal, which strove, like her, to safeguard their patrimony of Christian civilization while integrating themselves in the New Order. Germany herself would have to recognize that she could not do without a prosperous and strong France, because France is necessary to the world. Peace having ended the century-old antagonism of the two nations and the points of friction being smoothed down, there would be room between them for a collaboration all the more advantageous for Germany. France would serve as a guarantee for the rallying of the Latin people to the New Europe and a link to the American continent.

All the above is a mere paraphrase of declarations made June 26, 1940, by M. Baudoin to representatives of the foreign press. Upon the framework of these official statements, divagations were freely embroidered. Everyone knew Alsace and Lorraine must be yielded to Germany, but hoped there would be no other territorial sacrifice, at least in Europe. Some even intimated that, as compensation for the loss of Strasbourg and Metz, France could expand into Wallonia and Roman Switzerland, since Flanders and Germanic Switzerland were to be re-attached to the Great Reich, with all the other Teutonic-language lands. Moreover, France would maintain, in the interest and to the advantage of the European community, the administration of its colonial Empire, the Germans having themselves recognized that there were not in the whole world any more capable colonizers than the French. This, of course, left Italian claims out of account.

It was even added, despite the contradiction between the will for peace at any price and the possibility of some later re-

course to arms, that France could all the more freely make her voice heard in the peace conference since she still had an untouched fleet and a colonial army.

The Bordeaux illusions took a long time to vanish, if I may judge from conversations I myself overheard in Vichy several months later. For a long time, people continued to believe in the possibility of an arbitrated peace; and some still believe in this today, at least within certain limits. If this belief persists, is it not because they would prefer such a peace? The truth is that the Marshal and his counselors have always feared a world triumph of the Axis because it would crush France, or of the Anglo-Saxon powers because it would shatter "the national revolution" and would bring back liberalism in our country. For them, the ideal would be a France safeguarding her independence, even at the cost of some sacrifices, and able to maintain the authoritarian regime imposed upon her by Pétain.

✓ The masterpiece of Hitler's propaganda was to make French patriots believe they had everything to lose through the victory of their friends, while they might even gain something through their defeat. The efforts exerted before 1939 by Otto Abetz in Paris society circles and newspaper city rooms had not been unproductive. ✓ Thanks to such assistance, it can be said of Hitler as Prometheus said of Jupiter: "Whom the Gods would destroy, they first make mad."

III

Laval

When the Germans are in Paris, then, the traitor will be you. —JOSEPH CAILLAUX to Maurice Barrès, 1917

What is most extraordinary in the destinies of Marshal Pétain and Pierre Laval is that they finally merged. In 1914, Colonel Pétain was nearing the age limit and retirement. But the war broke out and he remained in active service. He led to battle the 33rd Infantry Regiment, in the ranks of which was a certain Lieutenant Charles de Gaulle. The career of Colonel Pétain was really going to start just when it would normally have ended. A young lawyer named Laval had just made his appearance in Parliament as Socialist deputy of an industrial district of the Paris suburbs. His antimilitarist sayings had already called him to the attention of the Minister of the Interior, and his name was entered in the famous "Carnet B," blacklist of spies and professional desertion propagandists. He eluded prison only because he enjoyed parliamentary immunities. Laval was of age to fight, but he preferred to remain under shelter, obtaining an exemption because of a varicose condition and shielding himself behind his privileges as a representative of the people. Several of his colleagues of all ages and all parties were to die facing the enemy, but Pierre Laval left this fate to his brother, an honest peasant of Auvergne, who fell on the field of battle in the Apremont forest in September, 1914.

The majority of the Socialist party to which Laval was attached was without restraint doing its patriotic duty. Its representatives in Parliament were voting the armament credits and loyally backing the war effort of the Government. Léon Blum, who was not yet a Deputy, attached himself to this majority.

The minority fraction solemnly condemned "the capitalist war," led a defeatist campaign throughout the country, and re-established clandestine contacts with the German Socialists. Among the best known of this minority were two future Ministers of Marshal Pétain: Ludovic Frossard and Pierre Laval.

This latter was a party to all the intrigues, all the plots, which aimed to demoralize the country and the French Army. In 1917, a serious crisis broke out in France: strikes in the war industries, mutinies behind the front lines. Pierre Laval had done fine work for Germany. But the man who reestablished the troops' faith in the High Command and in victory was General Pétain.

In November, 1917, Clemenceau took power with the sole motto, "I am fighting the war," and the spies and defeatists were ferreted out—but Laval again managed to save his own skin. He made a deal with Clemenceau's Chief of Cabinet, promising to denounce the revolutionary militants. This Chief of Cabinet was Georges Mandel.

The end of the war found Laval installed in a luxurious home in the most exclusive Paris district. With what money he bought it, not a soul knows. It was certainly not with his legal fees, because he had not yet begun to plead for big corporations, but only, as yet, for humble workers and trade union secretaries involved in labor disputes.

In the years which followed, Laval patiently prepared to join himself to the parties of the Center, setting his feet upon what he felt was the sure road to the highest places of the State. In 1920, after his former minority comrades founded the Communist group, Laval called himself an "Independent Socialist." In 1925, for the first time, he became a member of the Cabinet under Painlevé as Public Works Minister; and he participated thereafter in three other Government combinations of the "Cartel des Gauches" (early name of the Front

Populaire). Poincaré's return to power, after the monetary crisis of July, 1926, interrupted his Ministerial career.

Four years were to go by before he was able to resume it, allied by that time to the right-wing parties under Tardieu's presidency. There he was President of the Council the following year with Aristide Briand as Minister of Foreign Affairs. The two men did not agree at all. Laval was fighting under cover the policy of international cooperation and entente to which Briand's name remains attached. He installed himself in the Quai d'Orsay in January, 1932, but could remain there only a few weeks, just long enough to develop a taste for a longer stay.

In September, 1931, with Briand, Laval went to Berlin where he was received by Chancellor Brüning. In the end, this trip succeeded only in setting up a commission entrusted with the study of economic matters. The Hitlerites, already very powerful, had saluted the French Prime Minister in well chosen words. "Laval is a low-bred bastard," the Nazi Deputy Spangenhach exclaimed in the Reichstag. In his Munich review *Der Weltkampf*, the racial theoretician Alfred Rosenberg designated him a "Mediterranean Negroid."

After a new delay of two years which he used to consolidate the enormous profits of a not too scrupulous businessman and corporation lawyer (picturesque and edifying details are to be found in Henry Torrès's "France Betrayed"), Laval made his reappearance in the Doumergue Government in February, 1934, as Minister of Colonies. Marshal Pétain was War Minister. It had taken seventeen years for the man who provoked the 1917 mutinies to become a colleague of the General who put them down. On October 9, King Alexander of Yugoslavia and the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Louis Barthou, died in Marseilles at the hands of a Croat assassin. Laval succeeded Barthou in the Quai d'Orsay. He maintained his position for fifteen months, through four Ministerial shake-

ups. From June 7, 1935, to January 24, 1936, he was President of the Council.

During this period, the pro-German and pro-Italian tendencies of Laval were to unfold little by little before French public opinion. In his first declarations in the tribune he pretended to hold himself to the traditional policy. "The close collaboration between France and England is the essential token of European peace," he said December 2, 1934. But, the same day, he granted an official audience to von Ribbentrop, the Führer's "special envoy." During the funeral ceremonies for King Alexander at Belgrade, Göring did not conceal from the British newspaperman Ward Price of the *Daily Mail* that he had full confidence in Laval "to adopt a more conciliatory policy toward Germany."

Laval called as his most intimate counselor Fernand de Brinon, the first French writer to have presented Hitlerism to the French in a favorable light. In January, 1935, after the Saar plebiscite, accompanied and followed by innumerable brutalities against the opponents of National Socialism, Laval openly felicitated Hitler "for having avoided all reprisals against those who exercised their freedom of opinion."

During the same period, Laval went to Rome to settle personally with Mussolini all the pending questions between France and Italy. The Ethiopian affair was also discussed. To this day, the full scope of the commitments subscribed to by the French Minister of Foreign Affairs without the prior agreement of his Government is not yet wholly known. But one thing is beyond doubt: Mussolini has always acted as if he had been given a free hand, and Laval never denied this categorically. It was also during these Rome talks that Laval yielded broad privileges to the Italian organizations in France. He agreed to allow the Fascist Party to maintain in France recruiting offices, a secret police, and propaganda centers, and gave, in some ways, the sanction of law to what was later to be named "the fifth column."

Germany was soon to avail itself of these precedents to set up, in Paris and in several other French cities, "brown houses," students' clubs, and branches of the notorious "Franco-German Committee" where spies and Nazi emissaries gathered. The French section of this committee, founded and directed by Otto Abetz, composed in a way the General Staff of the future collaborationists. Five of its members have become Ambassadors since the armistice. Two of them were accredited to the Reich authorities: Fernand de Brinon in Paris and Georges Scapini in Berlin. MM. Gaston Henry-Haye, François Piétri, and Gaston Bergery represented the Pétain-Laval regime; the first at Washington, the second at Madrid, and the third at Ankara. Another, Abel Bonnard, was made Minister of National Education. Paris students have pinned on him the nickname of "Gestapette." Personages of minor importance, such as the Deputies Jean Montigny and Jean Goy, have been provided with more or less sinecures: one in Vichy and the other in Paris. Germany is careful to see that those who have served her well are rewarded.

In March, 1935, Laval, accompanied by Marshal Pétain, went to Cracow for Pilsudski's funeral. There he met Göring, with whom he had a talk lasting several hours. This meeting is said to have dealt with Germany's will for peace.

Germany was well disposed to conclude nonaggression pacts separately with each of its neighbors but resolutely hostile to any collective system of security. What lurked behind such a formula, the world knows today.

A recapitulation of the facts shows that, from 1935, Laval was thoroughly in favor of French collaboration with Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. To his mind, this collaboration would have guaranteed our European frontiers and our overseas possessions, with, of course, certain concessions to be granted to Italy in Africa and the restitution to Germany of her former colonies. This policy would have entailed the abandonment of our eastern alliances with Poland, Czecho-

slovakia, Rumania, and Yugoslavia. Thus we would have renounced, in exchange for a mere German promise (that is to say, for nothing), all the guarantees, insufficient though they were, on which rested the Europe of Versailles. If Laval did not dare to enforce openly such a policy—or even formulate it in clear terms—it is because French opinion would not have followed him and, moreover, because the Chambers would have overthrown him.

When he left power in January, 1936, four months before the advent of the Front Populaire, he had done nothing that could not be quickly repaired. In fact, Laval had failed. The functioning of democratic institutions had not allowed him to carry to a conclusion a personal adventure contrary to the best interests of the country. From this failure comes Laval's hatred for the Republican regime, his passion for dictatorship, his rancor toward his fellow Frenchmen who did not let him seize an authority comparable to that of Hitler or Mussolini.

The Hitler press, which had insulted him four years before, greatly deplored Laval's failure. "His strength weakens from day to day," stated the *Berliner Börsen Zeitung* October 17, 1935. "His prestige is weakening dangerously. . . . His failures constitute one of the most cruel deceptions undergone by the French nation for years." Shortly before the war, in his book "Marianne 39," Krug von Nidda, later German Consul General in Vichy, regretted again that Laval had failed in all he had undertaken.

During the Front Populaire days, Laval was rarely conspicuous in the Senate; but he intervened at times to plead for the totalitarian states, especially in the Spanish affair.

War loomed. The annexation of Austria, the suspense of Munich, the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia were warning signals. In the country, as in Parliament, Laval was felt to be the man of a policy which would lead him either before the firing squad if France repulsed German aggression victoriously, or to power for himself and enslavement for the

country, if military defeat were to oblige us to capitulate. As early as September, 1939, it was clear that Hitler's ruin would be a virtual death sentence for Pierre Laval.

There is no need to look further for an explanation of his attitude. If the sequence of events, he felt, brought him an apparent justification, this is to say, if the Germans entered Paris, roles would be switched. He would be a perspicacious patriot and his opponents traitors, as the defeatist Joseph Caillaux had dared say to Maurice Barrès in 1917.

When France was beaten and the Government sought shelter in Bordeaux, Laval's hour had come. His reappearance in public life was at first relatively discreet. He was not very sure of the ground across which he was moving. Arrived in Bordeaux June 15, he installed himself in a small office in the City Hall. The Mayor, Adrien Marquet, Neo-Socialist deputy, had been long since won over to Hitlerian ideology and maintained close contact with Nazi propaganda centers. For him, as for Laval, the war which had just ended in the collapse of the French Army was not a Franco-German war. It was rather a civil war between democracy and dictatorship for the domination of Europe. Laval and Marquet were both partisans of the system which had just triumphed, and for them the sole question was how best to use the military defeat to rally France to this system in spite of herself.

When Pétain and Weygand sued for an armistice, the game played by Laval was already half won since the fighting was going to cease. But a final violent spasm of the spirit of resistance was still possible even in the last hour. It had been officially declared by the Marshal himself and by Paul Baudoin, that the enemy conditions would be accepted only if they were compatible with honor and dignity. What still survived of French public opinion had taken these terms very seriously. The President of the Republic, Albert Lebrun, and the Presidents of the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies, Jules Jeanneney and Edouard Herriot, expressing on this point the

opinion of many a parliamentarian, judged that the Government could no longer deliberate in full independence in Bordeaux, to which advanced elements of the German Army were coming nearer from hour to hour, and that the Government must, in consequence, move to North Africa while there was still time.

Laval did not neglect a thing to prevent this departure. He grouped about him the Deputies and the Senators known to have favored the appeasement policy toward Germany after Munich. As this clique conferred almost continually in the City Hall at Marquet's, it was soon nicknamed "the Commune of Bordeaux." And it was, in fact, a return to the insurrectional tactics which, in 1793, 1848, and 1871, had permitted the Paris Commune to dictate its decisions to the regular government.

The plotters were at every opportunity busily harassing Parliament members and important officials preparing to embark on the steamer *Massilia* for Morocco.

"If you leave," they were told, "you are deserters; one does not save his country by abandoning it." On June 19, Laval headed a delegation to assure Marshal Pétain that the great majority of Parliament members in Bordeaux would not leave metropolitan France and would remain at his side until the end. The President of the Republic and the Presidents of the two parliamentary assemblies, however, had not modified their viewpoint, thus risking a rupture with Marshal Pétain and General Weygand. In a little Mediterranean port, a destroyer was waiting to take them to Oran; and, once in North Africa, vested with the highest constitutional authority, they would have had the power to disavow decisions taken in Bordeaux in their absence, to reject the armistice terms, to form a new Government which would have continued the war in the Empire beside Great Britain. This, Laval and his clique must avoid at all cost.

On June 21, Laval once more headed a delegation—this time to President Lebrun. "You have no right," said Laval,

“to pursue beyond the borders of France a policy, the Reynaud-Churchill policy, that you have yourself condemned in calling upon Marshal Pétain to form a new government. The military leaders tell us the battle is lost. The firing must cease. Leave the soil of France, and you will never again set foot upon it. My friends and I will maintain our liberty. In full accord with the miserable populations you will have abandoned, we will form a new government, and it will be the real Government of France.”

In the face of this final menace, Lebrun bowed. Loath to deliver France to Quislings, he still believed that Marshal Pétain could avoid this supreme abdication.

From then on, events succeeded each other at a rapid pace. The armistice conditions, known the evening of the 21st, were accepted the next day at ten o'clock in the morning. The same day, Marshal Pétain presented to the President of the Republic drafts of decrees naming Laval and Marquet as State Ministers. Lebrun first refused his signature, finally agreed to sign only upon Pétain's insistence. It was but a first step. Before the Government left Bordeaux for Clermont-Ferrand, Laval was designated Vice President of the Council of Ministers. Now, he had to consolidate himself in power. As long as the Republican Constitution of 1875 was to remain in force, as long as Albert Lebrun was to exercise the functions of President of the Republic, a mere signature could undo what another signature had sanctioned. A decree would have sufficed to unseat Laval as a decree had sufficed to name him. Marshal Pétain, then respectful of legal forms, would not have lent himself to a coup d'état. To clear the road, it was thus necessary—for the last time—to conform to the letter of the constitutional laws and gather the Chambers in National Assembly in Vichy. From them would be obtained the full powers which would permit establishment of the dictatorship later on. Let it be said, as we proceed, that this concern over legality was more apparent than real. The 1875 Constitution contained, in fact,

formal clauses which forbade such a procedure. Pierre Laval ignored them deliberately.

While aspiring to dictatorship, Laval was perfectly at home in the Parliamentary milieu in which he had lived for more than twenty-five years. He knew how to compose a majority: by seducing some, by intimidating others, by buying support (as cheaply as possible) when you can't turn the trick any other way.

To that effort he devoted himself after the installation of the Government in Vichy. Parliamentarians were coming from all sides into the little spa that the Germans had just evacuated. In former days, that time of year was the great Vichy bathing season. An elegant crowd filled the tiny provincial streets where all the luxury shops of the capital had branches. In the afternoon, it gathered in the park under an open sky; in the evening, at the Casino to listen to the best artists of France and from abroad. In the vicinity of the springs, idlers rubbed shoulders with weary colonials, there to take care of their livers. In the shady Allier quais, the passers-by lingered to watch light-colored canoes slipping along on the river. It was a countryside whose outlines were simple, where everything was made for repose and ease and all things spoke, each in its own way, of the sweetness of living.

There was little of these things in July, 1940. The town was still crowded with refugees, but they were obliged to yield their places quickly to the bureaus which disputed among themselves over all the available premises. Each of the great hotels transformed itself into a Ministry. The Vice Presidency of the Council and the Foreign Affairs Ministry moved in at the Hotel du Parc with the records they were able to save through the exodus. The Justice and Finance Ministries lodged themselves at the Carlton. The Interior Ministry was at the Casino, the War at the Hôtel Thermal, the Marine at the Hôtel du Helder. And, along with the hazards of this sad hegira, there is a certain touch of irony. The Ambassador Hotel sheltered

most of the foreign diplomats. But the Colonies camped in the Hôtel Britannique, and the Youth Services selected, of course, the Hôtel du Sport. The officials slept in the rooms in which they worked. In the drawers of the dressing tables, important state documents fraternized with neckties and pajamas. The cold correctness of administrative relationships yielded to a mixture of intimateness and disorder. It became impossible to avoid those who worked with you or to maintain one's distance. At mealtime, one found again the same faces in the same restaurants, in front of the same menus, eating the same food—which was not yet scarce.

In these unusual surroundings, each one began a life of uniformity. The time for individualism was ended.

The Senators and the Deputies, convoked in Vichy for the meeting of the National Assembly, at first had some difficulty finding one another in this crowd. Laval had prepared in the halls of the Casino and at the Society of Medical Sciences spots where they could gather, as in the past in the corridors and in the salons of the Chamber or the Senate, to exchange their views or concert their attitude. Vichy was something of Laval's own fief. Only a few kilometers from there he was born at Châteldon, a little village of Limagne. He still returns to vacation there each summer, but no longer at the inn his father exploited—he goes to the ancient feudal castle of which he has become the owner. Pierre Laval thus knew all the possibilities of Vichy, and he used this knowledge with adroitness to create the climate he sought.

Upon their arrival in Vichy, the parliamentarians were attracted by his agents to preparatory meetings where there were discussed, without protocol—and without responsibility—the consequences of the defeat and the future institutions of France. Those who had all their lives professed to be attached to democracy had no longer the courage to defend their principles openly. Dictatorship was on the way. It was inevitable, they felt, and one must make the best of it.

For many, politics had for years replaced a breadwinning job; it was an occupation which required no special knowledge and prepared them poorly for any other. Their paramount concern now became to insure their own material existence.

The collaborators of Laval were, on the other hand, well provided with funds which they doled out with parsimony and shrewd discrimination. They were rather more generous with their promises: the administration would be reorganized, general secretaries would be named. There would be governors of provinces, prefects, subprefects, mayors, state delegates to the corporate groups. In short, there would be places for all, at least for those who grasped in time that the supreme opportunity of all parliamentarians was to use their last vote to condemn Parliament to death.

Was this not preferable to exposing oneself to the planned harshness of the new regime (there would, perhaps, soon be concentration camps in France just as in Germany and Italy) by showing to an outmoded order of things a loyalty which would not prevent it from collapsing anyway?

In the National Assembly, moreover, no compact opposition could arise. Many members of the left-wing parties were detained in occupied France, the enemy having prevented them from setting out for Vichy. Others—nearly all partisans of all-out warfare—were in Morocco. They would be permitted to leave African soil only at Laval's pleasure. Thus, there was not the slightest doubt: the projects prepared by the Government would be ratified without difficulty.

After several days of preliminary debate, in which Laval intervened constantly, the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate met separately July 9, then constituted themselves a National Assembly the following day in a hall of the Casino.

The deputies and senators totaled about three-quarters of the normal membership of the two chambers. By 569 votes against 80, with 17 abstentions, the draft of a resolution was

adopted, granting full power "to the Government of the Republic, under the authority and signature of Marshal Pétain, in order to promulgate by one or more acts a new Constitution of the French State" guaranteeing "the rights of labor, the family, and the nation"—a law which "will be ratified by the nation and applied by the Assemblies it will have created."

The Third Republic had passed. France had a new regime.

The very next day, Marshal Pétain, who had remained aloof from the debates, proclaimed the first "constitutional acts." Unable to obtain the voluntary resignation of the President of the Republic, he did away with him with a stroke of the pen, declaring he would himself assume the functions of "Chief of the French State."

Thus the powers delegated by the National Assembly "to the Government of the Republic" were abused from the first day by Marshal Pétain to abolish the Republican form of government.

The Chambers, without being formally dissolved, were adjourned *sine die*. A new government was constituted which excluded left-wing parliamentarians whose collaboration had been sought by the Marshal at Bordeaux. Finally—and this was, perhaps, the decision most unexpected and most significant of the day—Marshal Pétain designated Pierre Laval as his alternate and, eventually, his successor.

This bizarre association carried within itself all the contradictions, all the crises, which were to characterize the operation of the Vichy Government later on. If the Marshal, having taken the highest place in the State, afterward granted the second to Laval, it could not have been for friendship's sake. The old soldier who denounced Parliamentary corruption in the terms we have seen—who had always practiced the most rigid integrity—has certainly not the slightest esteem for a man who owes all he is, all he owns, to the systematic exploitation of the lower depths of the regime. If Pétain chose Laval in Bordeaux it was because he needed him for the baser tasks

without which it would have been impossible to get rid of the Parliament. If, the operation carried out, he retained the man, it was because Laval had in the meantime made himself indispensable and especially because of the vital role the Vice President of the Council could play in the Franco-German and Franco-Italian relations.

The Marshal, of course, intended to keep Laval on a short leash, to allow him initiative only to the measure he would himself authorize and approve.

Laval, on the other hand, did not feel bound to such limits. He considered himself the real master of France. It was Pierre Laval who, in Bordeaux, prevented the Government from leaving for North Africa. It was Pierre Laval who imposed the armistice upon the civil authorities. It was Pierre Laval who wrung from the Vichy Assembly the abdication of Parliament. The Marshal existed for Laval only to gain the confidence of the conservative elements who have an innate respect for order, authority, and tradition—that is to say, of the people Laval despised to the utmost because they remained attached to the past while he, Laval, was working for the future.

And of this future he had a very clear conception he did not hide—that he publicly proclaimed, on the contrary, at the slightest opportunity with no concern for the discrepancies that could be observed between his words and Pétain's messages to the nation.

In his first speeches, the Marshal several times analyzed with precision the causes of the French defeat, although he never said the war should not have been fought. He knew it was desired and provoked by Hitler. Laval was not abashed to parade different opinions: "The greatest crime which has been committed in our country for a long time," he said before the National Assembly, "is certainly to have declared the war." One of the most curious documents of this period is a fifteen-page memorandum, called "Declarations on the National Assembly," which expounds views very like those of Laval on

the origins of the defeat, the causes of the war, and the future of France. Recourse to arms, says the "Declarations," could have been avoided if the Daladier Government had imposed a new Munich upon Poland. Below this indictment can be found the signature of sixty parliamentarians, including those of Bergery, Déat, and Scapini, men who were soon to become the most enthusiastic supporters of collaboration with Germany.

The reform projects of the Marshal seek inspiration, as we have shown, in French formulas. The National Revolution hopes to plunge its roots deep into the earth of the French nation; but Laval placed himself without reservation in Hitler's school. "Democracy has lost the war," wrote one of his sycophants. "France must repudiate an ideology which has led her to her doom."

Laval expressed himself with even more vigor as he opened the debates of the National Assembly: "Since parliamentary democracy wanted to fight against Nazism and Fascism and since it lost this struggle, it must disappear. A new regime, audacious, authoritarian, social, and national, must be substituted for it."

The Marshal remained devoted to an ideal of human liberty inseparable from Christianity. Laval, the cynic, who cares little for the Gospel, scoffed at this. The Socialist Deputy Spinasse, a former Minister under Léon Blum, appeared before the Chamber to pledge his support in these terms: "We have believed in individual liberty and the independence of man. It was merely an anticipation of a future which was not within our grasp." Laval heaped compliments upon this man who understood so well. And he took great care to give no precise answer when the former President of the Council, Pierre-Etienne Flandin, pleaded with him, in pathetic phrases, not to accept "any servile copy of foreign institutions and to safeguard, in France, respect for human personality."

The policy of Marshal Pétain toward Germany was perfectly clear although none could, as yet, formulate it except

with great discretion. It sought to limit the consequences of the defeat and ease the sufferings of the French while maintaining all that could be salvaged. Laval's attitude toward the victors was no less clear. As he was thoroughly devoted to them, he could express himself without reservations in the full National Assembly.

"We have no other course to follow than that of loyal collaboration with Germany and Italy. . . . Thus, we must integrate ourselves with boldness and sincerity in all respects in a European and continental policy."

The declaration of the sixty parliamentarians mentioned before asserted, for its part, that the tendency towards a national form of Socialism is universal, and that France must rise above her defeat to tread the path where Germany and Italy preceded her. "What has been vanquished," the declaration said, "is only one aspect of France which deserved its fate." Frightful words, they unveil unfathomable depths of treason and recall tragically these other words after Sedan for which certain 1870 Republicans have so often been blamed: "It is the Emperor's armies which have been defeated."

If the Marshal carefully avoided in his first speeches aggravating Franco-British differences, Laval said without compunction that "England has dragged us into the war and she has done nothing to allow us to gain the victory." He claimed: "We have no intention of declaring war on England, but every time we can, we shall retaliate blow for blow." From that very moment he was ready for a reversal of alliances. He would have carried it out immediately had he managed to win over French public opinion. *VES*

The parallel could be indefinitely pursued. While Marshal Pétain attached such great importance to a moral renaissance, Laval never breathed a word of it. It is probably on this point that discord between them ran deepest, because they certainly did not have the same concept of man or of life's meaning.

Thus, there were, as early as July, 1940, two policies in

Vichy: that of Marshal Pétain, which might rally masses of Frenchmen by its accents of honesty and wisdom, through the virtues it advocated, through the dignity it strove to safeguard; and that of Laval, backed as yet only by a handful of professional politicians, ambitious men without morality, or ideologues without judgment.

They had to conflict. Laval knew it from the very first day, and he was resolved to have the last word.

"A house divided against itself cannot stand." Who cited the Gospel thus? Marshal Pétain on August 15, 1940.

IV

The Victors

Nations are doomed only when they have lost their
memory. —MARSHAL FOCH

In July, 1940, most Frenchmen did not pay much attention to Laval's declarations on the necessity for loyal collaboration with Germany and Italy. The daily press had failed to feature them. In Vichy political circles, where isolation from the outside world favored the growth of illusion, many hoped that tolerable peace conditions could be obtained from Germany if only France would renounce her liberal traditions by instituting an authoritarian regime and rally voluntarily to the new economic organization of Europe.

People were not yet willing to give a broader sense to the word "collaboration." But everyone felt, with some confusion, that it takes two to collaborate: the relations of the vanquished with the victor could only be improved if the latter wished it so.

What, then, was the attitude of Germany toward France at that time? I know, in this respect, of no more significant document than the proclamation read by General Keitel at Rethondes June 21, in the name and in the presence of the Führer, as the armistice conditions were laid before the French plenipotentiaries. Like the "Mein Kampf" passage I have cited before, it is one of the fundamental texts one must constantly bear in mind when seeking to understand what has taken place in France since the armistice. For this reason, I feel it indispensable to reproduce it here *in extenso*:

"Confident in the assurances given the German Reich by Wilson, President of the United States, and confirmed by the allied powers, the German Army laid down its arms in November, 1918. Thus ended a war which neither the German people

nor their government had wanted and in the course of which the enemy, despite enormous superiority, had not succeeded in winning a decisive victory over the German Army, Navy, or Air Force.

"At the very instant of the German armistice commission's arrival, there began a betrayal of a solemnly given promise. It was on November 11, 1918, in this railroad car in which we now are, that there opened for the German people an era of suffering. All that can be inflicted upon a people in the form of privations and humiliations, in the form of material and human sufferings, has originated here.

"False swearing and disloyalty rose against a people which, after four years of heroic resistance, had succumbed to but one weakness; that of having faith in the promises of democratic statesmen.

"On September 3, 1939—twenty-five years after the beginning of the World War—England and France once more declared war on Germany without a shred of motive. Arms have decided; France is defeated. The French Government has asked the Reich's Government to make known Germany's conditions for an armistice.

"If the historic Compiègne forest has been selected for the submission of these conditions, it is in order to erase, once and for all by this redeeming act of justice, a memory which is an inglorious page of France's history and has been felt by the German people as the deepest shame of all time.

"After a heroic resistance, France has been defeated in an uninterrupted succession of bloody battles and has collapsed. Germany does not intend to give to the armistice conventions or to the armistice negotiations a humiliating character for such a brave foe.

"The aims of Germany are:

- "1. To prevent resumption of the struggle.
- "2. To give Germany every safeguard for the pursuance, imposed upon her, of the war against England.

"3. To lay the bases for the establishment of a new peace, the principal element of which will be reparation of the injustice committed by act of violence against the German Reich."

Let us try to isolate the essential ideas in this parallel between the two Rethondes armistices—that of November 11, 1918, and that of June 22, 1940:

Germany was not responsible for the 1914 war.

Germany was not defeated in 1918 and only put down her arms in consideration of Wilson's promises. However, the allies imposed upon her most humiliating conditions.

The Versailles Treaty opened for the German people an era of sufferings and privations.

The last sentence of the declaration deserves to be studied with some care because it contains in substance the definition of two policies to be applied successively, for the duration of the armistice and after conclusion of the peace.

The armistice will remain in force as long as the war against England is not ended. During this period, Germany must exercise absolute control of all the elements of military, demographic, or economic power still held by France and which she might be tempted to use, directly or indirectly, in favor of her

France is responsible for both wars.

France, despite a heroic resistance, has been defeated in July, 1940. The humiliation of November 11, 1918, is erased. By obliging the French plenipotentiaries to receive the German armistice conditions in the historic railroad car of Marshal Foch, in the very same place where the French conditions were dictated in 1918 to the German plenipotentiaries, Germany is not trying to humiliate France, but merely to do an act of redeeming justice.

The future peace treaty will impose upon France reparation of the injustices committed against the German people.

former ally. The future peace treaty will be inspired by a single aim: to make France undergo all that Germany underwent after 1919, or more precisely all that National Socialist propaganda pretends Germany underwent. It is not to historic truth but to the theses of this propaganda that one must refer, since the document begins by denying Germany's responsibility in the two wars and by asserting she had not been defeated militarily in 1918. We can grasp here one of the most consistent of Hitler's procedures, that of considering as true everything which can possibly be officially imposed as such.

Hitler gives one to believe, moreover, that by acting in such a way he is showing himself very generous since he reserves for a vanquished France a treatment identical to that suffered by an unvanquished Germany.

In the Germanic conception of the rules of war—a conception which holds right and might to be identical—it is just that the vanquished be handed over without reservation to the conqueror's will; but, inversely, it is unjust to impose a domination which is not founded on a victory of arms. All this can be summed up in a few words: Innocent Germany has suffered horribly, so guilty France must suffer horribly; and it is of no use for her to try to move the victor to pity.

To Pétain and to Weygand who told him, "We, the victors of 1918, recognize our defeat of 1940—deal with us as among soldiers, in honor and dignity," Hitler answered insolently: "You were not victors in 1918. You won the war but through treachery." It is the theme that was developed in a propaganda booklet, spread throughout Germany in millions of copies during the summer of 1940, under the title, "The German Victory in the West." Bluntly, the pamphlet said there was not a single great general in the allied camp during the 1914-1918 war.

If the officers and high functionaries who composed the first French Delegation to the German armistice commission at Wiesbaden had carried from Vichy any illusions on the possi-

bility of an understanding with the victor, they soon lost them after their arrival on German soil. At the very door of the hotel which had been set apart for their dwelling, a poster proclaimed in large type: "Reserved for the French Delegation. Entrance forbidden to Germans. The enemy remains the enemy (Der Feind bleibt der Feind)." At one of the first meetings, a French delegate dared to protest against certain financial measures of the occupying authorities, and the President of the German economic delegation, M. Hemmen, whom I had known before the war as a particularly courteous gentleman, retorted brutally: "You do not appear to understand the situation. The two delegations assembled around this table do not have equal rights. I am here to give orders. You are here to receive them." From time to time the press or the German radio paid homage to the heroic defense of the French Army. They reproduced, for instance, these plaudits of General von Reichenau: "The military valor of the French has not changed since the last war and, in certain battles in which the men found themselves in front of formidable matériel, they showed such courage that they forced the admiration of their opponents. . . . The French had prepared a defensive war. [Let us retain, as we proceed, this admission on the responsibilities of the war.] They had but little matériel, although what they had was excellent."

But this was an exception. The tone usually employed in speaking of France was exceedingly hard. The Berlin radio said July 9: "It is not by adopting today a totalitarian form of government that France will be saved. It is not by shifting the blame for her errors upon Great Britain that she will avoid the settling of accounts. All those responsible will pay." *OK!*

The Italian press writes, for its part, that Vichy's constitutional reforms are only a diplomatic maneuver. The Berlin correspondent of a Spanish newspaper telegraphs July 14 that Hitler and Mussolini will impose upon the French a very hard peace. Italian claims against France will be, for the most part,

satisfied. On the Rhine the work of Richelieu will be irrevocably destroyed. Germany and Italy must expand at France's expense, because they need territories for their surplus population while France is insufficiently populated. The New Europe will be realist; she will reduce France to the status of a second-rate power.

On July 19, the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* repeats that France must pay for her faults: "France has developed, day after day, hatred for Germany. When famine prevailed in Germany during the winter of 1918-1919, when our women and our children died by tens of thousands France deprived us of all supplies." And the *Giornale d'Italia* denies all possibility of collaboration by declaring: "Since the beginning of her national history, France has been the enemy of Germany and Italy. In the reorganization of Europe, France will have the peace she deserves. All the attempts she will make to rehabilitate herself at the last moment will be in vain." Let us also cite a *Deutsches Nachrichten Bureau* dispatch: "It appears that, in Vichy, the illusion is entertained that, by changing the political system completely, France will be washed of all culpability and the victor will forget the security measures he must take against his neighbor. . . . But we have an excellent memory and we will know how to use it."

If Germany were a completely victorious conqueror to mold the European continent as she pleased, what then would be France's fate? Long before Hitler the writers of the pan-German school did not let us ignore it. One, Ludwig Woltmann, affirmed as early as 1903 that "the Germanic race is called upon to dominate the earth, to exploit nature's treasures and the physical strength of man, to make of the passive races simple subaltern organisms for the evolution of its culture." Hitler doctrine is founded in its entirety on that pretension to a biological superiority of the German race. The German people are a people of lords (*Herrenvolk*); other people are a mere herd (*Herdenvolk*). A single letter suffices in the German language

Main
to create this insuperable gap between the master and the slave. France, "en-Jewed" ("Mein Kampf," page 704), "negroid" (page 730), "is the mortal enemy of Germany" (page 699); "she must be annihilated" (page 766).

Hitler one day said to Otto Strasser: "When the hour comes for the settling of accounts with France, the Versailles Treaty may well seem child's play beside the conditions we will impose on this country."

France will be annihilated. What does this mean? Can a nation of forty million inhabitants be simply eradicated? Of course not, but one can render it helpless, decimate it, cut it up. There are in the German prison camps 1,500,000 French soldiers, approximately one-fifth of the male population of France from twenty to fifty. If Hitler won the final victory, these men would never return to their country, or they would be authorized to do so only if other Frenchmen replaced them in the mines and in the workshops in which victorious Germany would use none but enslaved man power. The annual total of French births, which did not exceed six hundred thousand before 1939, would be halved or worse, since there would also be added economic difficulties and privations skillfully organized and maintained by the victor.

Besides Alsace and Lorraine, large territorial strips would be detached on the north and east where German colonists would be installed. The situation would be identical in the southeast provinces transferred to Italy for there are no longer annexations without deportations. These are no dreams. I am only commenting upon the map of the future Europe which Frenchmen in the Occupied Zone have been able to see in numerous bureaus of the German authorities, especially in the offices of the press service at Nancy. The country which would exist under the name of France would, of course, no longer have any army or navy. German garrisons would, moreover, permanently occupy the Atlantic ports. No longer would France be allowed industries except, perhaps, for the manufacture of a

few luxury articles in which she excels. All her trade would be with Germany. She might retain the right to print the word "franc" on her currency but the exchange rate would be set in Berlin. Her peasants would have to accept for the sale of their products exceedingly low prices so that the German worker might live at low cost in opulence. Hitlerian domination would encourage, on the other hand—just as it does in Poland—all forms of demoralization. A German general said of France during the spring of 1940: "We'll make of France a country half vegetable garden and half brothel." A little later, an economist who wanted to be pleasant declared at the Paris Chamber of Commerce: "If France would understand her interest, she will escape the fate of Poland and we will treat her as an associate—like Bohemia."

I have heard some people pretend that, even in that case, France would still have a chance to survive, thanks to her Christian traditions and her long past of civilization. To believe that is to forget that Hitler is the sworn enemy of Christianity. His victory would mark the beginning of a religious persecution which would make the memory of those of the Caesars fade from mind. All churches would be shut, destroyed, or transformed into temples of the new German cult, like the Strasbourg Cathedral which the very day after the German invasion became a museum dedicated to the German soldier.

As to civilization, the propaganda booklet "German Victory in the West" which I have already cited, warns us that henceforth German culture will make laws in the world of the mind. Greek, Latin, or French authors would be proscribed at the same time and under the same pretext as the Gospel because at their school free men have shaped their minds. Twenty centuries ago, a poet could sing: "Graecia capta ferum victorem cepit." It was the opinion of a Roman, and history has not told us what the Greeks thought of it.

In the pan-German literature from which Hitler was digging, before 1914, the themes of his dreams of Vienna and of

Munich, there are curious pages on France's future. I will cite only one. It dates from 1905, but one finds in it the germ of the idea that France should be cut up into several territories, the idea the Germans applied in June, 1940, in tracing the limits which separate the "forbidden zone," the "occupied zone," and the so-called "free zone":

I think of France as enslaved and divided into three parts according to its ethnic composition: 1) the north and northwest; 2) the center; 3) the south and east.

The north and northwest will include Artois, Picardy, and Normandy. After a more or less long period of Germanization, these provinces will obtain in full right the "civitas Germanica" and their integration into the confederation of the Empire. We will proceed in the same way toward the Walloon part of Belgium.

The center, whose population is approximately twenty million, could remain independent and preserve its language, its republican institutions, and its autonomous administration to the extent to which these liberties might conform with the supreme imperial authority, with the role the region must play as a fraction of the economic domain, with the slow but sure diffusion of the German language. To maintain the Germanic elements, here also quite numerous, to make among them a slow selection and to drain them, we will use the "civitas Germanica" which we will grant sometimes to entire communes, sometimes to isolated individuals. The extinction of the "non-Germanic" race should be hoped for in this region.

The independence we accord that part of France is not arbitrary, does not come from a benevolence without foundation. It is a limit we impose upon ourselves in order not to undertake everything at the same time.

The non-Germanic mass occupies the east and south. The fact that it groups at the frontier of the German Empire prevents us from annexing these regions as we have done for the north. We cannot grant independence to these areas as we have done to the countries of the center. Instead of limiting ourselves to preparing for colonization, we should in these areas pass to colonization itself. We cannot tolerate, at the very frontiers of the Empire, a foreign and

dangerous race. We should be able to shelter ourselves from political aggressions and hatreds of races. Through these colonies, we will put ourselves directly in contact with the Mediterranean and the ocean which will allow us to establish relations with South America which must form one of the parts of the new economic domain of the Empire. Such is the cutting up which would suit France; one must not lack energy to carry it out, but it presents no impossibilities.*

This passage gives a pretty good idea of what Hitler would do with France if nothing limited his possibilities of action. The tracing of the frontiers and the methods of domination could vary, but this is a detail. The final result would be the same; in one word as in a hundred, there would be no more France. When one knows with what minute concern for details the Germans have prepared all their campaigns, when one knows the work undertaken under the name of "Geopolitik" by men like Haushofer and Banse, one can rest assured that there are in the German folders under "France" ready-made plans for each eventuality which may present itself. Each makes for the maximum enslavement compatible with circumstances.

If Hitler did not immediately avail himself of his June, 1940, victory to crush "the mortal enemy of Germany," if he lent himself to an armistice which fixed apparent limits to the invasion, it was because he needed a French Government in Vichy to neutralize and control—without any fighting—the fleet, North Africa, and the far-flung colonies. As long as the war continued—as long as Germany must fight not only England, but also Russia and the United States—it was obviously to Hitler's interest that France be kept under the illusion that she preserved a certain independence and could hope for honorable peace conditions from Germany. France still possessed elements of power it would be foolhardy to throw into the allied camp. France and her overseas Empire had economic resources which could be exploited in a satisfactory way to the

* Joseph-Ludwig Reimer, *Ein Pangermanisches Deutschland*, pp. 166-167.

benefit of the German war effort as long as these resources continued to be administered, at least in appearance, by Frenchmen. If the conqueror disclosed his real intentions, the country would revolt, French blood would pour abundantly under the repression; but the output of lands and factories would drop to naught. And Germany, in the present phase of the war, cannot do without France's work.

Unlimited in its principle, Hitler's hatred for France was only limited temporarily in its effects because he must use his conquest for the best in order to win the final phase of the war.

The Vanquished

I know well that they shall be run out of France—all but
those who die. —JEANNE D'ARC, in prison

And so, at the beginning of July, 1940, three policies confront one another: that of Marshal Pétain, who preaches resignation in the hope of attenuating the suffering of the country and limiting the consequences of the defeat; that of Laval, who would embrace National Socialism and rally the nation to the Axis; and that of Hitler, who spares France only to exploit her the more easily later and aims, finally, at her annihilation.

But these are not the only actors in the drama. There is a fourth—the French people. Will this actor follow Pétain on the slow and uncertain path of the National Revolution? Will he yield to collaboration with the victor as Laval would have him do? Will he let himself be caught in the traps set by Hitler? Nothing can be done without him except by force. Although this actor has not a single means of expressing himself legally, the evolution of events will depend, in the last analysis, upon his attitude.

To understand fully this attitude, one must recall the days of the collapse when thousands upon thousands of refugees choked the roads, when there no longer was a battle line but only isolated attempts at resistance—at a river crossing, in a village, at a crossroads, along the edge of a wood. Many a spot in France was thus defended inch by inch, hour after hour, at the price of bloody sacrifice, although there was none who did not know this would not even delay the general advance of the enemy. The situation was desperate but, outside Bordeaux, refuge of the Government and High Command, it had not

entered the mind of anyone that a way out might be found by simply laying down arms.

During the preceding winter, during the "*drôle de guerre*," when the morale of both the army and the country had been worn out by inaction, official propaganda in the newspapers and on the radio had certainly been distressingly mediocre.

It had been notably powerless to counteract the sly maneuvers of the opposing propaganda which helped so much to sow confusion in the mind and precipitate disorganization behind the lines at the time of the invasion. To a great degree, people had been allowed to believe that Hitler would never dare attack, and that the war could be won without shedding blood, thanks to the blockade or a revolution in Germany.

But, if the French people had complacently entertained illusions on the extent of sacrifice they would be called upon to make, they were none the less well informed on Hitler's attitude toward France and the world. They understood full well that this tragic adventure could never end in compromise.

Having admired Norway and the Low Countries, the people were confident in the will of their leaders to pursue the fight to the finish in France and, if necessary, beyond her borders. Paul Reynaud's declarations after the first defeats—especially that in which he announced capitulation of the Belgian Army—excluded in advance all allowance for weakness. It was also recalled that, during the other war, the unity of the Allies had been indissoluble even during the darkest days.

So, one heard, especially after Dunkirk, many bitter observations on the British, many rumors—impossible to verify—which the German propaganda had skillfully fostered and kept alive. But it was nowhere admitted that France, having made a solemn agreement not to conclude a separate peace, could free herself from that agreement by giving up the struggle.

Such was popular sentiment. Before Marshal Pétain spoke, it was only at the very top of the military and civilian hierarchy that doubts of the country's future and the final issue of the war

were expressed. Maurice Dejean, then principal secretary to Paul Reynaud and until recently the National Commissioner for Foreign Affairs of Fighting France, has saved for us an eloquent testimonial on this unanimous will for resistance: "When the Government had to leave the banks of the Loire for Bordeaux, Paul Reynaud's car stopped at a railroad crossing in a little village. In this village could be found representatives of all parts of France; refugees from Alsace and Lorraine, refugees from Paris, soldiers on leave, garrisoned soldiers, local inhabitants—in fact, a miniature France. All these people, having recognized the President of the Council, gave him a magnificent ovation. They shouted, 'You must hold on' from all sides. 'It matters little if Paris is destroyed; the main thing is not to give up the fight. Fight to the end even if they occupy the whole country.' I saw this. It took place the afternoon of June 14 at Chalais, halfway between Montrichard and Bordeaux. That was the voice of the French people. It indicated the road to be followed with the backing of a nation which had kept intact the sentiment of dignity and the instinct of self-preservation."

This was so true that the announcement of a new Government presided over by Marshal Pétain was at first interpreted as signifying the resolution to pursue the war at all cost. People applied this simple axiom: "Pétain is Verdun, and Verdun is resistance to the bitter end."

This shows how very little the country knew of the real character and the personal tendencies of its new chief. At that time, as well as later on, nothing has better served Hitler's plans than the Pétain legend.

On June 25, after the signing of the armistice, the Marshal himself had to make this public acknowledgment before the people of France: "You were ready to continue the struggle; I knew it." It fell to the garrisons of the Maginot Line forts to furnish the most striking proof of this French will not to lay down arms. For five days, from June 25 to 30, refusing any

discussion with representatives of the enemy, they continued to fight until officers of the French delegation to Wiesbaden had managed to get in touch with their commanders. And, even then, these commanders consented to surrender only when they realized that the Germans threatened to prolong the occupation of Lyons while taking advantage of it, in the meantime, to evacuate stocks of foodstuffs, manufactured goods, and even the machine tools of the great silk center, to the Reich. General Weygand, although among the first to recommend conclusion of an armistice, highly praised this heroic obstinacy in his Order of the Day for July 3 which ended on a note of pride and hope: "This page of valiance and fidelity to military duty will constitute the testament of today's army, a testament in which the army of tomorrow will find, along with a legacy of glory and the lessons of its predecessors, the path to its own destiny."

For my part, I lived in North Africa during these days of June, 1940, in a milieu where the spirit of resistance was freely expressed. General Noguès, French Resident General in Morocco since September, 1936, had been entrusted from the outbreak of the war with the High Command of the armed forces of Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia. He had established his headquarters in Algiers, and from there he had personally directed, since June 10, operations against Italian troops on the Tripoli frontier. For eight days, an unbroken succession of delegations of farmers, merchants, industrialists, and important natives passed before him to affirm their will to resist on the spot. It was well known that it would not be easy to withstand a modern war in a country almost exclusively agricultural and badly off for means of communication. Further, a great part of the troops and matériel had been sent to France during the past weeks, and the Spaniards, who had just occupied Tangier, had taken advantage of this to concentrate important forces at the boundary of the two Moroccan zones.

North Africa was none the less ready to carry out her duty

as bastion of the Empire. It was hoped that the armistice conditions would be judged unacceptable, and that the Government of Bordeaux would reject them, or that the local authorities, answering General de Gaulle's appeal, would refuse to submit themselves to capitulation. General Noguès forwarded from day to day to Marshal Pétain and General Weygand the echo of the population's unanimous desire.

The situation was identical in Syria under General Mittelhauser and in Indo-China under General Catroux. The telegrams which reached Bordeaux from Algiers, Beirut, or Saïgon could all be summed up thus: "Allow me to disobey." Finally, military discipline was the strongest but, after the Armistice, General Noguès was heard to say: "A soldier can only obey; I have bowed with fury in my heart and shame on my forehead."

Once sure that North Africa would follow Pétain, there were many who tried to prolong resistance on their own account by rallying to General de Gaulle in England. Very few succeeded, for all normal communications with the outside were cut. Some embarked secretly for Portugal on fishing boats. The most fortunate were pilots who managed to snatch airplanes and make for Gibraltar. However, a strict surveillance was soon instituted at all airports, gasoline tanks were emptied, tires were left flat to prevent escape. But even this did not suffice to discourage the most daring. One Frenchman even had the good taste to seize the personal airplane of the General heading the Italian armistice commission in Morocco.

At Fez, at the end of June, several student pilots had gathered to leave together in an overloaded plane which crashed several hundred meters from the field. Military authorities ordered the burial to take place at night and without ceremony, but the population quietly covered the coffins with flowers.

For eight days, thousands of people went individually to the

British Consulates to voice their loyalty to the alliance. The police did not interrupt this spontaneous plebiscite.

At Casablanca, the Consul General of the United States, Herbert Goold, received numerous testimonials which he welcomed as a great friend of the French Republic and answered by assuring that the United States would not let the flame of liberty die in Europe. His attitude, which at that time did not lack courage, has contributed more than a little toward maintaining in Morocco sentiments of confidence in the final victory of the free nations and in the resolution to cooperate toward this victory by all possible means when the time shall come.

Later on, all open manifestations of desire to resist in North Africa became impossible; but this will itself did not lose anything of its firmness, at any rate for several months. When the first Italian delegation established itself in Casablanca, its members wisely lodged beyond the town and carefully avoided showing themselves in public. They were so uneasy that even in the exercise of their official duties they reduced to a minimum their contacts with French officers and officials they were entrusted to control. And when, at the beginning of August, a German mission wished to go to Morocco, General Noguès invoked the population's sentiment to declare that, if the visit were made, he could no longer guarantee the maintenance of order.

If North Africa did not resign itself, the unoccupied departments of France also refused to abandon hope. The individual Frenchman visibly strove to reestablish tolerable living conditions, asking nothing of the Germans and ceding nothing to them. Upon my first visit in Vichy, I was able to ascertain that my comrades of the Foreign Ministry had not abdicated their liberty of judgment and speech. This ministry, which before the war was considered opportunist, and in which the desire for a brilliant career has always been notorious, has constantly displayed since the armistice—even under leaders

like Laval and Darlan—a courage and firmness of view entirely to its honor. The situation was similar, with rare exceptions, in the ranks of the army. Many a man of good will has been systematically discouraged by a chief resolved to forbid all—even underground—reconstitution of the nation's armed forces.

At Aix en Provence, where the military schools of Saint Maixent and Saint Cyr had just been reorganized, I saw "Le Premier Bataillon de France" parade in November, 1940. It was formed of youngsters of twenty who, having taken part in the war as junior lieutenants, had returned to their places in the school in the uniform of the simple soldier. I read in their eyes that their motto, "Ils s'instruisent pour vaincre" (They learn to conquer), had lost nothing of its significance, and that they did not believe that the war was finished for them.

At about this time, a copy of a letter from General Giraud to his children circulated from hand to hand. It said in part: "The soul must be rebuilt in France, the army in North Africa, and the weapons abroad." Why did he say this if not in view of the final struggle for liberation. I have never been sure whether this letter was authentic or apocryphal. However, this doesn't matter. Its value as a document is less in its signature than in the unanimous approbation that greeted it.

Of the Occupied Zone I can speak only from hearsay. I have not gone there a single time since the armistice, but many friends have told me, in Vichy and elsewhere, of what they had seen. The attitude of the population of the invaded departments was, naturally, to be the determining factor in Franco-German relations because they constitute the majority of France's population, because they include the principal industrial centers and the richest agricultural regions, but also, and above all, for the very reason that they were under occupation. It could not be forgotten that the German was the invader while Vichy's influence exercised itself there only in a very feeble way.

Right at the start there was a certain wavering. On the way

back to their homes, the refugees nurtured disagreeable memories of the lack of foresight with which the responsible administrations had let them wander on the roads to escape a battle which never ceased pursuing them, which even passed them at times. They aspired only to order and a resumption of work. They certainly feared the Germans; but one also could hear reflections showing that poorly directed propaganda can work against its own goal and do more damage than the propaganda of the enemy. "We have been told so many lies. Perhaps the Germans are not as bad as they have been painted. Maybe there is some way of getting along with them."

Many also thought that, if the war were really over, it was necessary to adapt oneself to it and manage to live with the Germans as long as they should occupy France. The conduct of the invader did not discourage this frame of mind. The Germans did not resemble the legends about them. They were no longer the *Boches* we had known in 1914, brutal, stiff, insolent. They were mostly young, easy in their movements, and rather courteous. Some even went to a good deal of trouble to gain the sympathy of Frenchmen. Great posters covered the walls with these legends: "Abandoned populations, have confidence in the German soldier." Here and there, the army's mobile kitchens organized food distributions. It thus appeared wise to wait and see before judging; without, however, compromising one's position by premature fraternization. Dignity alone would have forbidden this.

Public opinion did not have to hesitate long. The German hand had carefully concealed itself in velvet, but it was always an iron hand. Before the first week of July was over, the execution of a certain number of workers of the Renault plant became known. They had dared protest against a new labor regulation. While the Germans affected to respect and honor the tomb of the Unknown Soldier under the Arc de Triomphe, they unmasked their real sentiments by dynamiting, full in the

center of Paris, the monument erected in honor of General Mangin, first Governor of the Rhineland.

There were no longer, as in 1914, disorderly scenes of violence and plunder. This is because, in the interval between the two wars, the German General Staff had perfected its methods so that, this time, it could no longer be accused of barbarism. This was not difficult. It was enough that all infringements on private property be covered in advance by a legal document. The military and civil authorities of occupation seized abandoned houses in town or in the country under the pretext that the proprietor had displayed hostile sentiments by failing to return home. Everything of any value—old pieces of furniture, paintings, works of art, linens, silverware, chinaware—was removed “to a safe place.” This “safe place” was generally inside Germany.

The soldiers received their pay in special currency called “the occupation mark” which was not accepted within the Reich, but which the French dealers were obliged to accept at the arbitrary rate of twenty francs to the mark. This form of payment, created by a decree of May 3, was an ideal means of legal plunder. It allowed, in fact, the transfer to Germany, through individual invoices to families, of nearly all retail trade stocks, especially articles of clothing. One detail did not escape the attention of the clerks: many of these paper marks had been printed in 1937. Of course, the supplies of raw materials or manufactured articles and foodstuffs were requisitioned *in toto*, everywhere, and without delay.

The method of controlling the banks was particularly ingenious. A census of gold, foreign currencies, and bonds had been ordered by the French Government several months before the invasion, and so the German authorities had merely to consult these figures and forbid transfer of these values, even when the owner lived beyond the Occupied Zone. The control was made complete by the opening, in the presence of a German delegate, of all safe-deposit boxes rented by banks to

their clients. The avowed aim was to guarantee payment of future "reparations" by a more realistic and efficient procedure than that employed by the Allies after 1918. All this was, of course, but a prelude to spoliation. It was, for Germany, a question of insuring very rapidly the control of French economic activity by apparently legal means and in such a way that this control could not be challenged after the war. One common procedure was to order the banks to require the immediate repayment of loans granted to this or that corporation. The corporation, as a rule, would not have the funds to comply. An intermediary would then present himself, offering his good offices toward straightening matters out—provided capital stock of the corporation was conveyed to anonymous purchasers (who always turned out to be Germans). A number of chemical and other enterprises were obliged to integrate themselves into German trusts in order to obtain raw materials or fuel. For publishing houses, in particular for several very well known Parisian periodicals like *Illustration*, censorship was employed by bringing pressure to bear. In order to continue publication, the editors were forced to accept not only the collaborators but also the financial participation imposed by the occupation authorities. In the industrial centers of the north and east, part of the forbidden zone, German agencies assumed actual control of factories and mines whose heads had fled to the Unoccupied Zone; and usually the heads were not allowed to return.

This is an incomplete enumeration, but much less was needed to enlighten the people of the Occupied Zone as to the schemes of methodical plunder that hid behind the exemplary behavior of the German authorities.

Propaganda efforts availed the German authorities little, despite the help of a few French traitors. The Paris collaborationists have made and continue to make much noise, but they have no standing among their compatriots, who judge them at their face value. In the ranks of this fifth column are some people of relatively good faith whose national sentiment has been stifled

by fear of communism, hatred for the Jews, and a dislike for what they call electoral demagoguery or any ideologies which the right-wing parties had incautiously assisted in peacetime without realizing that they were playing into the hands of their own worst enemies. Then there were also men—and especially women—of what is still called by force of habit “the best society” who were accustomed to courting the mighty of the day and to practicing the religion of success. But the most common explanation for evil-doing is ambition or selfish interest. This is the case of politicians like Marcel Déat or Jacques Doriot who had attained a certain notoriety under the parliamentary regime without being able, however, to mount the stage of even semi-success. It is the case of businessmen or industrialists who want to safeguard their fortune or swell it by having a hand in the despoilment of other Frenchmen.

The dishonor which was linked to these men before the war splashes upon the invader whose tools they are. It must be said on this subject that the German himself has not shown himself more respectable in matters of personal honesty. The inhabitants of the invaded regions were not long in learning that, with a little money and through the proper channel, it was possible to obtain anything. A clandestine traffic sprang up in certificates permitting one to move about at night after the curfew or for trips to the Free Zone. The average Frenchman knew nothing of that corruption which obtained from the highest to the lowest rungs of the National Socialist ladder, and, as he discovered it, the prestige of the invader was irreparably shattered in his eyes.

In the beginning of August, when it became clear that the bombing of England had failed and that the war was thus not near its conclusion, hope came back and resistance took on a more clearly accentuated character. The morale of the occupation army was far from high at this period. Soldiers displayed little enthusiasm when selected to garrison the Channel coast, and many allowed themselves to say that this adventure had

lasted too long, that there would be a sad ending. It is disagreeable to live, even as a victor, in a country where the people rub shoulders with you without seeming to notice your presence. Dignity is a redoubtable weapon for him who knows how to use it.

In the subway, German officers no longer dared to sit down because, each time they arose to yield place to a woman, she would act as though she failed to understand. Each time English planes flew over Paris, the inhabitants rushed to the windows with beaming faces and sarcastic smiles for German soldiers who, obeying orders, took refuge in the shelters. These tactics became so widespread that, after several experiences, the German authorities forbade the use of sirens to signal the presence of British airplanes above the capital. In the moving picture houses, newsreels became an occasion for varied manifestations, whistling, animal roars. German authorities were compelled to order that the houses remain lighted during that portion of each program.

There already existed underground organs of resistance. Little is known of their activity in the first months of the occupation except that they contributed to the escape of many a French and Allied prisoner. Forbidden news and watchwords circulated as if by magic. The best evidence of this came November 11, 1940.

That day Paris had decided to honor the dead of the other war and gather in memory of the victory. From early morning, little groups of two or three marched past the Arc de Triomphe of the Etoile. The slab which covers the tomb of the Unknown Soldier soon disappeared under heaps of flowers and, toward evening, at the closing hour of workshops, factories, and offices, the Avenue des Champs Elysées overflowed with a crowd which was all the more impressive because it moved in absolute silence.

Incidents took place at several points. A German officer, hustled, moved as if to pull out his revolver and was disarmed

in a split second. Elsewhere, several members of the Fascist "Young Front" so foolhardy as to venture out of their headquarters were severely manhandled. Students passed here and there, carrying on their shoulders long fishing rods called *gaules*. From time to time they stopped to yell "*Vive de—*" In the interval of silence after each cry they brandished their fishing rods. Thus it was that General de Gaulle was publicly acclaimed in Paris several months after the armistice.

The demonstration was soon interrupted by the arrival of German detachments which obliged the crowd to break up. Numerous arrests were made, especially among the students. University courses were suspended for several weeks, and the surveillance of German spies was redoubled in the Quartier Latin. But the proof had been given. French youth would never bow beneath the yoke.

One of the most significant popular watchwords of the last war had been: "*On les aura.*" But that which best expresses the attitude of occupied France of today toward the invaders is its counterpart, an excellent parallel: "*Ils ne nous auront pas.*"

VI

The First Months of Vichy

Peace in itself is excellent, I admit. But of what use is it with a faithless opponent? —LA FONTAINE

At the first session of the Wiesbaden Armistice Commission, General Charles Huntziger, head of the French delegation, made the following statement: "France is resolved to apply the armistice convention with a loyalty in which she has never faltered in the course of her history." This was without doubt the will of Marshal Pétain, who hoped he could expect in return a similar loyalty on Hitler's part. Faithful execution of obligations contracted on both sides was, to his mind, the only way to preserve France against new German demands and guarantee to the Vichy Government free exercise of the authority it needed to administer all of the national territory. Franco-German relations, up to the conclusion of peace, would thus evolve within a very definite framework: the armistice, nothing but the armistice.

Not knowing the secret of ministerial deliberations and only able to judge from surface appearances, the man in the street could imagine, at least at the beginning, that the Vichy Government effectively enjoyed the independence it needed. Nothing prevented it either from taking drastic measures demanded by the needs of a country devastated and disorganized by seven weeks of blitzkrieg, or from starting to carry out its program of the National Revolution.

Rebuild the ruins and dress the wounds—that was the first job to be done. Much progress was made in a short time toward restoring communications and electric distribution networks, rebuilding thousands of bridges or replacing them temporarily by hastily built makeshifts. The repair of damage

inflicted upon various ports, Marseilles especially, was undertaken.

At the end of June, 1940, there were four million French and Belgian refugees south of the demarcation line. Since transportation was seriously crippled, their repatriation could be effected only step by step. In the meantime, it was necessary to provide them as adequately as possible with lodging and supplies. At the same time, the army had to be dismissed, so that a problem like that of the refugees thus arose for two million demobilized men, many of whom were not certain of finding work once they reached home. On the other hand, man power was lacking in certain agricultural regions at the peak of harvest time when it was more necessary than ever not to waste the slightest part of the crop. Everyone did his best. Finally, almost all the prisoners of war were still interned in camps on French territory while awaiting transfer into Germany. American volunteer ambulances and the Red Cross provided food, clothing, and medicines.

On the other hand, the first "Constitutional Acts" of July 11, 1940, which abrogated the 1875 Republican regime and established the foundation of the new French State, were soon to be followed by an abundant outpouring of laws and decrees. The "Constitutional Acts," despite their name, were really abuses of power. The July 10, 1940, mandate conferred by the National Assembly upon the "Government of the Republic" in the person of Marshal Pétain was not—despite all that has been reported—a blank check. While this mandate expressly left room for promulgation of a new constitution, there were two reservations: this constitution was to be "ratified by the nation" and put into application only when the assemblies created by it should have been gathered. Thus, no "constitutional act" could be effective as long as these two conditions had not been met. However, Marshal Pétain disregarded this. As a result, despite the Parliament's withdrawal, the Vichy regime lacked any juridical base and could in no way

be considered, either at home or abroad, as the legitimate Government of France.

The laws and decrees promulgated in Vichy during the first months aimed to reinforce the authority of the central power over the administration, to give it support in the interior of the country, to punish "those responsible for the defeat," and to reorganize the economy.

All the legal guarantees which protected civil servants against the arbitrary acts of their chiefs were abrogated as early as July 18. It was decided that any state employee might be relieved from his duties, and that any civil servant must be born of a French father. The unions of officials were dissolved a little later.

The desire to rally adolescents to the new regime first manifested itself in school reforms and then in the setting up of an obligatory labor service which regrouped twenty-year-old youngsters in youth camps for "a moral, physical, and civic education." On the other hand, the veterans of the last world war, scattered up to then in innumerable leagues and societies, had to coalesce with the recently demobilized soldiers into a single movement, the "French Legion of Veterans," whose mission was to be the propaganda and protection wing of the National Revolution in the country.

Those responsible for the defeat had long since been designated by the right-wing press as the politicians, the Freemasons, the Jews, and recently naturalized foreigners. Numerous parliamentarians and men prominent in political life had left France proper in May or June to go either abroad or to North Africa, and it was decreed July 23 that they might be stripped of French citizenship by a simple Government decision and, in any case, might reenter France only by special visa. It amounted to condemning them, without the intervention of any tribunal and without the possibility of presenting a defense, to a sentence which has always been considered, and properly so, one of the most severe: exile.

The Supreme Court of Justice, which was to sit in Riom, was instituted July 31. It was immediately charged with establishing "the responsibilities incurred in the passage from a state of peace to a state of war." General Gamelin and former President of the Council Edouard Daladier were the first to be accused. Other political personalities were soon to undergo the same fate, especially the former Air Minister, Guy La Chambre, who had voluntarily returned from the United States to submit himself to the justice of his country. The President of the Chamber of Deputies, Edouard Herriot, was relieved September 20 of his elective functions as Mayor of Lyons—functions he had exercised for some thirty years. Still more radical measures were taken against Freemasons and Jews. Secret societies were dissolved by the law of August 14. French citizenship was withdrawn from Jews of Algerian descent October 8. French Jews were reduced some days later to a special status which banned them not only from nearly all public functions, but also from most of the liberal professions. Finally, to reach the so-called *métèques*, that is, French citizens of foreign origin, it had been decided as early as July 22 that all naturalizations granted since 1927 be revised.

At the same time, in the economic field, numerous laws and decrees shaped the transition from a liberal to an authoritarian system. Workers' and owners' syndicates were abolished in August and replaced by composite committees, called upon not only to determine working conditions, but also to supervise production and distribute raw materials.

The statute of stock corporations was reformed in September; administrators from then on had to answer to their management, personally and for all their belongings. Other measures, finally, encouraged the tilling of abandoned land and the placing of city unemployed in the country.

The best is mixed with the worst in this legislation. One can easily recognize what is of foreign inspiration, what aims to model France upon the framework of the totalitarian coun-

tries. What is harder to unearth—because none had dared to affirm it without ambiguity—is the desire to safeguard traditions which belong to France and to her genius. It is thus, for instance, that the youth associations have not been integrated in a single body but have been left free to cultivate within themselves spiritual principles directly in opposition to Hitlerism. It is thus, moreover, that the French Legion of Veterans had been formed with the aim of opposing creation of a single party so noisily demanded by Jacques Doriot and Marcel Déat. In the Germany of 1933, on the contrary, the Hitlerian storm troops had absorbed the Stahlhelm.

Hitler was not deceived by this. In his eyes, the France of Pétain resembled Hindenburg's Germany much more than it did the Third Reich. Those who had entertained the idea of seducing him through apparently totalitarian reforms had been indulging in strange illusions. The manner in which German authorities in the invaded regions, as in Wiesbaden, applied the armistice conventions should, however, have brought them down to earth.

If there exists in Europe's history one certainty, it is that Germany, whatever its regime, ignores all laws but that of force. She violated the Versailles Treaty, which had been imposed upon her after her defeat and which she affected to call a *Diktat*. She tore up the agreements freely negotiated by the Weimar Republic, such as the Locarno Pact. She trampled upon the nonaggression guarantees given by Hitler to his Czechoslovak, Polish, and Russian neighbors. No more was she to respect an armistice convention of which she had herself dictated the most minute terms.

One of the basic reasons which had decided the Bordeaux Government to sue for an armistice was the necessity of keeping the entire French Army from falling into the victor's hands. Such an eventuality would have been the equivalent of delivering to Germany the very sources of the nation's life. The invader held 500,000 prisoners June 17. He captured

more than 1,000,000 more between June 17 and 25. Article I of the armistice convention stipulated that the surrounded troops were to lay down arms. Those which had carried on the struggle up to enforcement of the armistice should, consequently, have been liberated after having been disarmed; but the Germans refused to release them. And, moreover, the conqueror even had the face to contemplate arresting, in the Occupied Zone, all Frenchmen of military age who had been mobilized in any capacity (even as factory workers or as functionaries maintained in their civilian duties); he forbore only because French production, which he needed, would have been completely disorganized. Thus Hitler acquired the instrument of pressure he was to use constantly and so violently upon the Vichy Government. "The fate of our prisoners retains, in the first place, my concern," Marshal Pétain was to say October 10, 1940. "My thoughts do not abandon them. Each day I strive to improve their condition." And each day, also, Hitler used the prisoners, threatening to worsen their lot or promising to liberate a few, to drag France from concession to concession.

Article III of the convention stipulated that, "in the occupied regions of France, the German Reich exercises all the rights of the occupying power," but it also recognized—and in the most binding terms—the authority of the French Government in "the occupied and non-occupied territories." The juridical scope of this text was precisely defined on the French side in a report presented in the beginning of 1941 to the Council of Ministers by Admiral Darlan. This report states: "The rights of the occupying power are settled by international law and are essentially determined by the security requirements of the occupying army. These rights do not give power to the occupying force to intervene in local, communal, or private matters when its security is not at stake. It is understandable that these security measures do not authorize the seizure of goods, valuables, or bonds (with the exception

of foodstuffs for the occupying army under conditions identical to those applied by the army of the occupied). *A fortiori*, it does not allow the seizure of houses, the ousting of the inhabitants, the taking of their furniture and their money, the imposition of the conqueror's agents in the administration of each locality in place of the civilian authorities of the occupied, or, finally, the annexation of a part of the occupied territory." Such is the universally recognized doctrine of international law. We shall see how it was applied in the relations between the signatories of the Rethondes convention.

The first prerogative of a Chief of State is to select his ministers with full liberty. Marshal Pétain was never able to exercise this power except in precarious fashion. After fifteen days, he was obliged to drop Albert Rivaud, whom he had called beside him in Bordeaux as Minister of National Education. This eminent professor had published in 1938 a far-sighted book on Germany's recovery ("Le Relèvement de l'Allemagne, 1918-1938"). The book, written with all the exactness and serenity of history, allowed Hitler's ideology no concession. It is known that Marshal Pétain attached the greatest importance to educational reform, and when he selected Rivaud to direct it, it was because it was to be founded above all on love for one's country. So the opposition of Hitler to Albert Rivaud is all the more significant.

This was only a beginning. On August 31, Pierre Laval returned from Paris after a four-day conversation with German authorities. One week later, General Weygand—with General Colson and General Pujo, who were his two assistants—no longer belonged to the Government. Five other civilian Ministers left the Cabinet at the same time. Semiofficial comments indicated, on one hand, that General Weygand's presence had become necessary in Algiers, where he was to go as Delegate General in French Africa "with the broadest powers to insure the defense and the security of the Empire." It was explained, on the other hand, that, in order to mark strongly

the character of the new regime, Marshal Pétain had judged it preferable to do without such of his Ministers as formerly had belonged to the Parliament—except Pierre Laval. In reality, although the French Army was reduced to a negligible number of effectives and stripped of modern matériel, the Germans feared that it might, under Weygand's authority, regain the moral cohesion and the patriotic fervor which had characterized it for so long. For similar reasons, the Germans wanted to do away with Ybarnegaray, the Youth Minister, a man of the right who favored rapprochement with Franco's Spain and Mussolini's Italy but was resolutely opposed to Germany—whatever her regime or leadership. Minister of Colonies Lémery, Senator of Martinique, had also been included on the proscription list drawn by Hitler and cashiered because he was not 100 per cent racially white. Lémery was, however, close to Marshal Pétain, and he had publicly campaigned before the war for the summoning of the Marshal to power. To hide German intervention in the choice of his collaborators, the Marshal at the same time dismissed three other Parliamentary Ministers, two of whom were notorious Laval partisans: Adrien Marquet and François Piétri.

If Germany's influence was exercised upon the composition of the Government, the situation was, of course, similar for the appointment of functionaries. Their entrance into the Occupied Zone was from the start very severely restricted, and German authorities permitted passage only to those of them from whom they felt there was nothing to fear. The nominations dealing with the Free Zone and the Empire also fell under an indirect control, the Germans having refused to let the *Journal Officiel* circulate in the Occupied Zone if they were not informed beforehand of the decisions it was to carry.

At the beginning, installation of the Government in Vichy had been considered a highly temporary measure. According to the terms of Article III of the armistice convention, "the French Government is free to select its seat in the non-occu-

pied territory, or else, if it so wishes, to transfer it even to Paris. In the latter case, the German Government pledges to grant all the necessary facilities to the Government and to its central administrative services, so that they may be enabled to administer, from Paris, the occupied and non-occupied territories."

In truth, Marshal Pétain hoped to return to Paris in short order. He declared in his speech of July 11: "So as to settle more easily certain urgent questions, the Government looks forward to establishing itself in the occupied territories. To this effect, we have asked the German Government to liberate Versailles and the Ministerial District of Paris." An official communiqué, published the next day, added the following details: "If the return to the Paris region materializes, it will take place only in a spirit of the most complete autonomy. The Government is firmly resolved to maintain itself there only if it obtains all the necessary guarantees insuring complete independence for itself and the diplomatic representatives accredited to it, in the full exercise of international liberties." Four days later, M. Léon Noel, former Ambassador of France at Warsaw, one of the negotiators of the armistice, and Delegate General of the Government to the Paris occupation authorities, declared that the question would be very shortly settled at Wiesbaden.

From that moment, a certain number of Ministries transferred to Paris some services which had not been able to find room in the hotels of Vichy or near-by spas. This movement was not hindered by the Germans, who were satisfied to exclude individual functionaries in whom they had no confidence. It was useful for them to have in Paris financial and technical control services without whose cooperation it would have been difficult to take in hand the direction of French economy as they wished. Moreover, if all the actual administrative services would return to the capital, there would remain in Vichy only a relatively small political staff which

could be ousted at the opportune moment at one stroke by the formation of another government in Paris. Throughout all this, Pierre Laval's advice played a not unimportant role.

In the months which followed, there was still the frequently recurrent question of the Government's desire to return to Paris. On August 13, the Marshal told the French that this project, although not immediately feasible, was not abandoned. "Paris—heart and brain of the Nation, crucible in which were refined from time immemorial the destinies of the country—remains for the French the natural seat of governmental authority. From the very moment the armistice went into effect, my Government strove to obtain from the German Government permission to return to Paris and Versailles. But, on August 7, the German Government informed me that, while observing its agreement in principle as embodied in the armistice convention, it could not, for reasons of a technical character and for as long as certain material conditions were not settled, authorize this transfer. It is thus still necessary to wait, but I think I can assure you that the only question is that of delay. I add that if you wish my return, I wish it with as much fervor as you."

On October 10, he was also to say: "I cannot forget the Parisians in whose sorrows I partake, of whose dignity I approve, and in whose midst I soon hope to be again." In four months, the matter had not made the slightest progress, Germany having set conditions incompatible with both the armistice terms and the most simple dignity. But, as was to become apparent in December, Pierre Laval had not given up using the possible return to Paris as a bait to lure the Marshal into a trap.

Official propaganda repeated and kept current after the armistice the view that, by putting an end to the struggle, the Marshal had saved French unity. Actually, this unity was no longer intact. It had suffered, as early as the latter part of June, a most cruel wound by the inclusion in the Reich of the

Alsace-Lorraine departments of the Haut-Rhin, the Bas-Rhin, and the Moselle. The annexation was carried out with planned brutality. The Prefect of Strasbourg was put into jail for having set fire to his archives—"property of the German State." He was replaced by Robert Wagner, a native of Baden, who was named Gauleiter of Alsace, and the man who had been called upon for the Saar plebiscite, Joseph Buerckel, installed himself at Metz as Gauleiter of Lorraine. All French authorities were ousted and supplanted by Nazis from beyond the Rhine. All inhabitants not born in the country of Alsatian parents (and this affected numerous functionaries) were expelled and removed to the Free Zone demarcation. Granted barely two or three hours to get ready, they were allowed to take with them only two or three thousand francs, a few pounds of worn-out clothing, and no objects of value. Their belongings were confiscated and sold at auction. The remainder of the population was given the choice between a written adhesion to National Socialism and deportation to Poland. Alsace-Lorraine refugees, who were particularly numerous in the center of France (all the population of Strasbourg, for example, had been evacuated in the neighborhood of Périgueux in September, 1939), were not allowed to return home unless they submitted to these same conditions. Those who preferred to remain in the Free Zone were despoiled of all they owned in their country. The use of the French language and even the beret was prohibited. The names of places were **Germanized**. The Mont Saint-Odile, sanctuary of Alsace, became the Nationalberg. French monuments were torn down, even that of Pasteur.

None of these things were told in the Free Zone press. I have found, from July to October, 1940, in that press but two allusions to our eastern provinces. The first, reproducing a Berlin dispatch dated September 21, said without further comment that, after the annexation of Alsace and Lorraine, the population of the Reich totaled 90,000,000 inhabitants. The

other covered a speech of October 10 in which the Marshal addressed "to our populations of Alsace and Lorraine compelled to abandon suddenly their towns and villages, the expression of our affectionate and deep sympathy." This is all the French were allowed to know of the plight of their brothers.

In 1871, for the first time, Alsace and Lorraine had been torn from the mother country. Before leaving the French Parliament, the representatives of the lost provinces had addressed to their colleagues this unforgettable appeal: "Delivered with contempt for any justice and through an odious abuse of force to the domination of the foreigner, we declare once more as null and void this pact which disposes of us without our consent. Your brothers of Alsace and Lorraine, separated now from the common family, will maintain for France, of which their hearths are deprived, a faithful affection to the day when she returns to take her place anew." It was only on September 3, 1940, two months after the annexation, that the Vichy Government took upon itself to have General Huntziger, himself of Alsatian origin, submit to the German armistice commission, a note thus formulated: "Confident in its own right, the French Government raises a solemn protest against the measures taken in violation of the armistice convention with regard to the Alsace and Lorraine departments and their populations, measures which constitute a *de facto* annexation of these territories." This "solemn" protest was made clandestinely, because neither its existence nor its contents have ever been revealed to the French public. What a contrast between the juridical dryness of this text and the pathetic declaration of 1871! Thus capitulation debases the character and corrupts the heart!

With Alsace and Lorraine torn away, France saw herself, moreover, menaced with the loss of the vast region which sprawls north and east from the estuary of the Somme to Lake Geneva and contains its greatest industrial riches. As the "for-

bidden zone," Flanders, Artois, Picardy, the northern part of Champagne, the unannexed Lorraine departments of the Meuse, Meurthe-et-Moselle, the Vosges, the eastern part of Burgundy with its famous vines, and the Franche-Comté were submitted, from the very moment the armistice was enforced—and in flagrant violation of this armistice—to a different regime from that of the other occupied territories. Refugees and functionaries were forbidden to enter this zone under the pretext that destruction wrought by war made communications difficult. The spinning mills and the weaving factories of Roubaix and Lille, the alcohol distilleries and the sugar refineries of the Aisne, the coal mines of the Pas-de-Calais and the Somme were run by German economic agencies from Brussels. Abandoned estates were turned over to the Ostland Society which had already operated in Poland. German farmers were settled in various districts. Later on, there was some easing of the initial regime, particularly in regard to the return of refugees and the entrance of functionaries. But the frontier of July, 1940—a genuine frontier guarded by police posts and sentries—stood between the forbidden zone and the rest of the occupied territories. It is difficult to see in this anything but a threat of annexation.

Finally, if one examines the relations between the Free and Occupied zones, he will see that those portions of the armistice convention guaranteeing free exercise of the authority of the French Government throughout the nation remained a dead letter. Communications between the two zones were restricted and precarious. The railway service which repatriated the refugees was suspended on several occasions in July and August, 1940. Numerous functionaries and even the members of the Government were herded beyond the demarcation line. The newspapers of the Free Zone were banned from the Occupied Zone. From there on, the German authorities permitted the movement of postcards bearing only printed phrases the sender could complete by adding a few

words on dotted lines. Many a family of the Occupied Zone has used them, however, to ask from Free Zone correspondents how "Aunt Victoire" was getting along, for there is no regulation that cannot be evaded with some imagination. It was only during the spring of 1942 that other postcards, without printed phrases, were put into service. Had such a thing been in force before the war in the relations even between two foreign countries it would have been judged unbearable. Decisions of the Vichy Government could be executed in the Occupied Zone only if the German authorities pleased. These authorities controlled the press and consequently authorized, when they did not provoke, the attacks against Marshal Pétain, his Ministers, and his policy. The Legion of Veterans was banned in the Occupied Zone. The youth camps were tolerated only in the Free Zone. The Vichy Government could not, of course, dispose in any way of the economic resources of the occupied territories. In the matter of food supply, as well as industrial production, this was very serious because the Free Zone was deficient even in ordinary times and received from the Occupied Zone its farm products and manufactured articles. It had to negotiate in Paris with representatives of the Reich in order to regulate exchange of goods between the two parts of France.

This is what Germany's word is worth. Thus was French unity "safeguarded" by the armistice; thus were the Bordeaux illusions dispelled.

Overseas, the situation was no more satisfactory. As early as June, 1940 (date of the occupation of Paris), Japan, ally of Germany, requested special rights in Indo-China. In September, it obtained garrisons and airports. This military agreement was completed in October by economic concessions placing Indo-China's production fully under the control of Tokyo. All this was done in exchange for the platonic guarantee of respect for France's rights in the Far East. It is well known how Japan has managed to exploit this first success to

obtain more and more far-reaching concessions. The agreement with Japan was barely concluded when Siam in its turn asked several provinces.

If Hitler, despite his promises, has not allowed Marshal Pétain to administer freely French territories in their entirety, no more has he allowed the Chief of State to practice an independent policy in his relations with other states. In particular, the clauses of the armistice convention were set up in such a way as to provoke an almost instantaneous break with our ally of yesterday, Great Britain. Such is the background of the sad day of July 3, when British units opened fire on a French squadron at Mers-el-Kébir, near Oran. Marshal Pétain had declared several days previously that honor had been safeguarded since we should not have to deliver to Germany the fleet she might have used against our former comrades-in-arms. But Article VIII of the armistice convention inferred that disarming of the French fleet would take place in the peacetime harbors—which meant, for a great number of units, in Brest or Cherbourg, ports occupied by Germany. The translation published in France leaves room for some confusion, but the German text does not allow for any doubt. It is said therein that the mooring port will be the determining factor (*massgebend*). Under the circumstances, one can see why the British Admiralty has not been satisfied with a guarantee which rested, in the last analysis, on a German promise.

The still sadder affair of September 24, 1940, in which Free French and British faced the French defenders of Dakar, created a similar problem. In an Order of the Day, Admiral Darlan affirmed that there were only Frenchmen in Dakar. This was true but by a narrow margin. On the morning of September 23, two planes bearing swastikas had landed at the Casablanca airport. The first transported a complete economic delegation, come directly from Wiesbaden and headed by Herr Gerhard Schellert, former Consul General in Antwerp, reputed to be a specialist in navigation and matters of eco-

conomic spying. I had myself been assigned by General Auguste Noguès to the disagreeable mission of receiving, as they stepped from the plane, these functionaries of the Reich—the first to arrive in Morocco after the conclusion of hostilities. Schellert did not hide from me that he was going to Dakar to set up as permanent representative of the armistice commission one of his fellow travelers, a certain Klauber, an expert in African matters. Klauber had been, before the war, a shipping agent at Bathurst in British Gambia and had retained a very strong taste for whisky. At Dakar, Schellert was also to study the possibility of reestablishing sea and air traffic with South America. In the second plane were a Luftwaffe colonel and his ordnance officer, who were also going to French West Africa, probably to inspect the landing fields. All these men were urgently recalled to Germany before having been able to carry out their mission.

How can one imagine, even if France had managed to avoid all incidents, that Germany would have allowed her to maintain diplomatic relations with Great Britain when the Government of the Marshal was obliged by the armistice commission as early as September 9, 1940, to end the activity of the diplomatic representatives of countries occupied by armies of the Reich? This interdiction was even extended later on to the Danish Legation although there still exists in Copenhagen a Government whose sovereignty has been guaranteed by Germany—nominally, at least. Before the United States' participation in the war, the only Allied country that had been able to maintain a diplomatic representative in Vichy was Canada, on account of the blood ties which unite the French Canadians to the mother country where their ancestors originated. The Canadian Chargé d'Affaires, Pierre Dupuy, despite the numerous personal friends he had and still has in France, was, however, obliged to reside in London most of the year and was only allowed to come to Vichy at very in-

frequent intervals and for short stays during which Gestapo agents perpetually shadowed him.

So, three months after the armistice, the Government of Marshal Pétain had not been able to extend its authority to the French departments in their entirety, nor to prevent territorial mutilations, obtain the return of even a part of the prisoners, or safeguard the independence of its foreign policy. One might just as well declare that the Rethondes convention had placed Pétain's Government, *de facto* if not *de jure*, in a position of complete subjection to Germany.

Every Bordeaux illusion had collapsed. Since Germany had not respected its word, since the existence of a free government in France was impossible, the logical solution was to put an end to a crumbling treaty and pursue the war: a desperate solution, but not an absurd one. It probably would not have aggravated the sufferings of the French people, Hitler having tempered his conquest up to that time only to draw from it a greater yield. This necessity would have imposed itself upon him to a still greater extent had he been deprived of Vichy's cooperation. The general situation had evolved considerably since June. German aerial blows against England had failed. There were still in France several hundred planes in good condition and a few elite troops which might have rapidly reinforced the North African defenses. The French and British fleets, united again, would have easily gained the upper hand in the Mediterranean. Libya, which was then guarded only by Italians, would have succumbed in several weeks. Thus the Allied front would have spread without any rupture in its continuity from Morocco to Syria. Under these conditions, would Italy have dared to attack Greece as she did October 28? But these are mere hypotheses, and it would be vain to speculate upon them any longer.

What is not an hypothesis, however, is Marshal Pétain's determination never to take up arms again, whatever might happen. French blood had flowed too abundantly; it could no

longer flow, or France would succumb from exhaustion. Only one road remained open: that of negotiation toward a *modus vivendi* with Germany which might offer more guarantees and a greater stability than the armistice convention.

VII

Montoire

He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it.

—Ecclesiastes 10 : 8

In order to bargain, as every businessman knows, you must have something to offer in exchange for what you want. In October, 1940, Vichy could not hope to get anything from Germany except by surrendering some elements of economic activity or military power over which it had maintained actual control, which means: the resources of the Free Zone and overseas possessions, the merchant marine, the war fleet, and the maritime and aerial bases of the Empire.

Germany did not dare to grab them in June, 1940. These supplementary conquests would have led her to disperse her strength at a time when she had to concentrate it in the effort to get rid of England. Furthermore, the best way to prevent the French Empire from refusing capitulation and from continuing the war at the side of Great Britain was to grant Marshal Pétain an appearance of sovereignty. Hitler relied upon his own way of enforcing armistice clauses to give him control of everything he had abstained from requesting expressly at Rethondes.

To become convinced of this, it is enough to examine what happened to the French merchant fleet in the months which followed the armistice. Article XI of the convention signed June 22 in the Compiègne forest forbids any merchant vessel flying the French flag to depart from Empire ports until the German and Italian governments have authorized the resumption of commercial traffic. These provisions could possibly have been originally interpreted as giving the Axis powers a token assurance on ships whose delivery they intended to re-

quest, at least in part, at the time of the peace treaty—as had been done in Versailles for the merchant shipping of Germany. The ban on sailing was certainly onerous, but it appeared tolerable since it was forecast at that time that the war would be ended before autumn. When it became evident that England would not lay down arms, the Vichy Government strove to recover the control of its vessels. Supply difficulties were beginning to make themselves felt because of exactions inflicted upon the Occupied Zone by the German Army. It was thus becoming necessary to organize rapidly the transfer to the Metropolis of the cargo of two hundred ships sheltered in colonial ports since June and to reestablish, furthermore, regular shipping services for the transportation of the agricultural products and raw materials of the Empire.

During the talks at Wiesbaden toward the end of August, the Reich made known its conditions. It requested, first of all, that, on each cargo, a high percentage should be delivered to the Germans or to the Italians, either in the form of raw material or in articles manufactured by France's industry. It was, for the Axis powers, a means of forcing the British blockade at France's risk and a way to participate in the exploitation of a vast colonial empire it would have been impossible to conquer militarily. Germany would thus secure some of the merchandise she needed most for the conduct of the war: rubber from Indo-China, oil grains and edible oils from western Africa, meats and coffees from Madagascar, minerals and ores from Morocco, while, at the same time, improving the food rations of the German and Italian populations with North Africa's contributions in cereals, lamb, fruits, and olive oil. The proportion reserved to the victor was in general settled at 25 per cent. In certain cases it reached 50 per cent, especially for bananas from the Antilles which were, in principle, to be unloaded in Bordeaux and Nantes. But one must note that these percentages dealt only with the exactions made in port upon the arrival of the ships. Germany's share was to be still further

increased—sometimes up to 80 per cent or more—through requisition or purchases from willing sellers later on when the products of colonial origin entered the Occupied Zone.

From an economic standpoint, this bargain could not fail to interest Germany, but it was still more alluring in its political consequences. If the French merchant marine began to sail again for the benefit of the Axis, it could be foreseen that incidents would not be long in arising with the British war fleet. These incidents might then degenerate into full-fledged conflict, and France would thus be dragged into the war against her former ally. To prevent any Franco-British understanding on questions pertaining to the blockade, the Wiesbaden Commission based the resumption of commercial traffic upon conditions whose aim is easy to discern. French boats were forbidden to call at British ports of control, submit to the navicerts regulation, or allow inspection on the high seas by patrol boats of the Royal Navy. Any French ship hailed was to scuttle herself if she could elude search in no other way. This regime was effective for the first time in the latter part of September, 1940. It became necessary to modify it within certain limits for reasons geared to the general evolution of Franco-German relations.

One can see that the armistice had brought up an infinite number of problems without solving them, and that the Vichy Government thus found itself maneuvered into permanent negotiations with Germany as long, at any rate, as relations between the two countries were not on a stable basis.

Hitler had no interest in modifying the status quo except in one respect: that Marshal Pétain consent to contribute to Axis victory by allowing Germany to use without restriction all that France had managed to retain as strategic means of action. This was advantageous for the Reich in so far as it concerned means Germany could not have seized any other way. Of course an agreement with Vichy must not alienate Italy or compromise, through premature concessions, final and total German domination in postwar Europe.

Precisely to secure himself against this total domination, Marshal Pétain strove to escape from the uncertainties of the armistice by capitalizing upon the moment when the offer of limited help on France's part could induce the Führer to stipulate, in advance and in a way that it was hoped might be generous, what would be his peace conditions.

In this negotiation which was to lead to the Montoire interview, the Marshal took the initiative through two public manifestations which are part of the same whole: his speech of October 10 which was broadcast, and the message on the National Revolution which was published the next day in the *Journal Officiel*. The speech itself contained no allusion to Franco-German relations. It outlined the accomplishments of the Government since the armistice and then invited the French to turn toward the future, a future Pétain did not hesitate to describe as "dark and sad." The Chief of State expressed in this speech his solicitude for the prisoners, for those expelled from Alsace and Lorraine, for the population of the Occupied Zone. He dwelt in particular upon the coming of winter, which would aggravate all the supply difficulties—difficulties imposed, said he, "by the severity of the defeat and by the will of the victor." Finally—and it was visibly the principal object of the address—he invited the nation to overcome its sufferings so as to associate itself with him in an enterprise of lasting reconstruction, and he announced the imminent publication of a message in which his listeners would find "the plan of action of the Government" and the "essential characteristics of our new regime." He concluded by saying that the National Revolution could only be carried out with the assent of the public spirit "in confidence and in faith."

The message itself is, without a doubt, the most important document to be published in Vichy since the armistice. One finds in this message, in fact, the complete program for France's recovery as conceived by Marshal Pétain. It begins with a severe condemnation of democracy, but also with the affirma-

tion that "the New Order is a French necessity" and that it cannot consequently be "a servile imitation of foreign experiences." France must preserve "her national unity" and maintain "the inheritances of her Greek and Latin culture and its radiation throughout the world." For the false idea of natural equality, she will substitute a hierarchy based on work and talent. She will realize "a harmonious conjunction of authority and liberty." She will engage herself, like her neighbors, "on the path of a new economy . . . organized and controlled." But an authoritarian regime would, by itself, be insufficient, because the revolution would succeed only "if the nation understands it and calls for it."

It is within the framework of, and in the light cast by, these principles that one must enter the declarations relating to Franco-German collaboration: "The new regime . . . will put back in honor the true nationalism, a nationalism which, scorning to withdraw within itself, surpasses itself to attain international collaboration. This collaboration France is ready to seek in all domains and with all her neighbors. She knows moreover that, whatever may be the political map of Europe and the world, the problem of Franco-German relations, treated in so light a fashion in the past, will continue to determine her future. Perhaps Germany can, on the day after her victory over our arms, choose between a traditional peace of oppression and an entirely new and cooperative peace. To the miseries, the disturbances, the repressions and perhaps even to the conflicts that a new peace copied on the last one would foster, Germany might prefer a creative peace for the victor, a peace that would generate well-being for all. The choice belongs first to the victor: it also depends upon the vanquished. If all avenues are closed to us, we will know how to wait and suffer. If a hope, on the contrary, arises over the world, we will know how to dominate our humiliation, our mourning, our ruins. In the presence of a victor who will have known how to

dominate his victory, we will know how to dominate our defeat."

These terms, voluntarily measured, each word of which must be weighed to be well understood, were destined first of all to condition French opinion for developments represented as possible but not as definite. They constituted, to a still greater degree, an appeal and also a warning addressed to Hitler.

By transposing for the use of Germany these declarations officially made for the French, the appeal of the Marshal to the Chancellor of the Reich could be formulated approximately in these terms: "If you grant us generous peace conditions, if in particular you renounce the territorial mutilations you have menaced us with, we are ready, from now on, to collaborate with you as a free nation on a footing of equality for the common prosperity of Europe, while accepting your discipline for the exploitation of our economic resources but also while maintaining our own political institutions and our civilization which are not animated by the same spirit as yours. At this price, but at this price alone, we can rally ourselves to a new organization of Europe which, without our willing cooperation can only be erected on force."

This appeal does not reveal an unlimited confidence in the victor's generosity nor much optimism over the possibility of reaching satisfactory agreement with him. It thus seems certain that when he allowed Pierre Laval to start preliminary conversations with the German authorities in Paris in the beginning of October, the Marshal had taken care to outline with great precision the position of France by accentuating still more heavily the reservations which characterized his message of October 11.

For his part, Laval, who had the information and propaganda service under his command displayed much less discretion. From the very first days of October, he neglected nothing which might foster in French opinion attitudes favorable to his personal policy and to an ordering of Franco-German rela-

tions. In particular, he encouraged wide reprinting of an article in the *National Zeitung* of Essen (a paper which is said to be inspired by Göring) which said: "The hour of Laval has come. Laval wants an entente and collaboration with Germany, not temporarily, it seems, and for reasons of opportunism, but definitively." A ridiculously exaggerated importance was attributed several days later to the announcement that the occupying authorities were going to give France 100,000 tons of potatoes for the Paris population. Such propaganda is, after all, rather maladroit. The process of calling the attention of the French to the sympathy Laval could boast of in Germany could only make the French twice as suspicious of the Vice President of the Council. On the other hand, the Parisians knew better than any one else that delivery of food-stuffs promised by Germany would be only an infinitesimal compensation in contrast to the levies by her upon France's supply stocks since the armistice.

Despite this propaganda, public opinion was exceedingly surprised when the radio and the press announced October 23 that Laval had, on the previous day, an interview with Hitler in Montoire, a little village of Loir-et-Cher. The terms of the communiqués were carefully calculated to give at the same time the impression that events of the greatest importance were in the making and free rein to hypotheses while making no clear assertions. "It is a matter," it was said, "of the country's future. It is the most significant fact which has taken place since the armistice. The two conferees sought a solution to the Franco-German political problems. The secrecy of the talks has been jealously safeguarded. It cannot, thus, be known yet if the two nations will soon emerge from an armistice state into a peace state."

Almost immediately it was learned that the Hitler-Laval interview was only a preliminary and that Marshal Pétain himself was to leave forty-eight hours later for Montoire with

the Vice President of the Council to meet the Chancellor of the Reich.

Montoire, in the charming countryside of Touraine, on the bank of the peaceful river called Loir, is the very heart of France. Here, in this place of low and gently sloping hills, the poets of the French Renaissance had flowered, Pierre de Ronsard and Joachim du Bellay. Here, in a newly found peace, the medieval fortresses had humanized themselves to become, upon the eve of modern times, agreeable homes in which everything expresses the joy of living and the pleasure to be found in keeping courteous relations with one's fellow men. Here the French mind has contracted an eternal alliance with a sense of balance, of elegance, and of harmony. If the word "civilization" has any meaning, it is certainly in this province, in this garden where Frenchmen of the sixteenth century showed that they had reaped and intended to preserve the inheritance of ancient Greece: a love of clarity, the cult of reason and beauty where the expression of individual life and experience is the foundation for universal values, the progress of thought and art valuable not only for one era but for centuries to come, not only for one nation but for humanity. So if there is a region where France can grasp fully the peril which threatens her, it is certainly in this obscure village where Hitler elected to meet Pétain, where the Führer of the Third Reich was to ask the Chief of the French State to recognize once and for all the preeminence of Germany in Europe. It is not enough for him to dictate peace. It is first of all necessary for the vanquished to abjure his own history and his own soul while bowing to the so-called "mission" of one nation to dominate all others. The drama taking place in France since the defeat culminates here. There is but one word left to say before the military and political capitulation reaches its climax in dishonor and moral abdication. This word—will Marshal Pétain pronounce it?

French opinion waits in anguish to hear the first results of

the interview. In the evening of October 26, a brief Vichy communiqué announced that the two chiefs of state proceeded "to a general examination of the situation and, in particular, the means of rebuilding peace in Europe." The broad vistas opened by the commentaries which had followed the Hitler-Laval meeting are thus toned down to infinitely more modest proportions: "The two spokesmen have agreed on the principle of collaboration. Methods for its application will be examined in due course."

On the other hand, pains are taken to stress that the interview "took place in an atmosphere of utmost courtesy." Newspaper accounts describe with complacency the honors rendered to Marshal Pétain by a battalion of the Wehrmacht and a section of the Führer's personal S.S. guard. The Führer is even reported to have said to Pétain while greeting him: "I know you have not wanted the war and I regret to make your acquaintance under such circumstances." In truth, while the interview was accompanied by a certain military ceremonial which lent itself to suggestive scenes for the newsreels, one cannot pretend that Chancellor Hitler showed excessive courtesy to the French Chief of State.

The Marshal had been effectively compelled, despite his great age, to take a long car ride. The meeting could have been held in another locality of the Occupied Zone—Moulins, for instance—which was less distant from Vichy. Hitler, who was going toward the Franco-Spanish border in order to meet General Franco October 25, had thus demonstrated that a conversation with the vanquished did not merit his turning from the road or that he postpone his program by a single day.

The Marshal had wished, moreover—and this reveals much on his own thoughts—that the memory of the sufferings of the country be closely associated with the events of the interview. So, before returning to Vichy, he stopped in Tours to walk among the ruins of the quarters devastated by the June fighting and again in Amboise where he visited a prisoners' camp. In

the latter town, it is reported, he was met by a secret agent of Mussolini.

The October 26 communiqué had been issued by the Presidency of the Council, that is to say, under direct instructions from the Marshal's office. But, the very next day, the French radio, directly controlled by Laval, made remarks much less discreet: "The word 'peace' is again resounding. But, by associating itself to the word 'collaboration,' it is rich in promise. France ceases to play a passive role. This path is the only path which can insure, with the most honorable peace, the safeguarding of our country."

It is striking to see that this tone was exactly like that of the first German commentaries: "Today," announced the Berlin radio, "France has decided in favor of collaboration with Germany. Marshal Pétain has recognized the possibility of an understanding. He has decided to carry it out. The basis of Franco-German collaboration is established: it is to guarantee peace for a long time. Now, the door for negotiations is opened wide." It was thus reasonable to imply that it was all a matter of defining peace preliminaries. Such was the general conclusion to be gleaned from articles in the German press. "Of all the countries defeated by Germany," remarked the *Frankfurter Zeitung* on October 25, "France is the only one which has maintained a government with which it is possible to negotiate in the sense of international law."

"France is near peace," said Paul Baudoin in his turn. He was still—but only for forty-eight more hours—Foreign Minister. But he added at the same time, addressing himself to correspondents of the American press, that France was not in a condition to resume military operations, and that, consequently, it was absurd to suppose that she was shortly going to enter the war at the side of the Axis powers.

On October 27, *L'Effort*, published in Clermont-Ferrand by former Socialists won over to Laval's policy, announced that a

joint declaration by France and Germany on the future of Europe was to be expected sooner or later.

All these hypotheses were apparently given some confirmation when Laval was named, on October 28, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs in place of Baudoin who remained in the Government as Minister in charge of the services of the Presidency of the Council under the direct authority of Marshal Pétain. Laval's nomination was immediately interpreted by *Deutsches Nachrichten Bureau* as Marshal Pétain's sanctioning of "the Franco-German will to collaborate" and as underlining "Laval's personal merit for having established contact with the Führer."

The reaction of French public opinion to this information and commentaries was as sudden as it was unanimous. Nobody in France wanted a peace negotiated with Germany or, more precisely, dictated by her as long as the Reich was still engaged in a conflict with England that might end one day or another in Hitler's defeat. Such a solution appeared, at the same time, dishonorable and absurd. If Germany won the war, France would have no way to escape the hand of a victor habitually a traitor to his own promises. Were Germany beaten, France which would have accepted collaborating with her, would be associated with her in defeat. In one case as in the other it amounted to a certainty of finishing the war vanquished.

As soon as Marshal Pétain had decided to confide to Laval the direction of France's foreign policy, M. Charles-Roux, French Ambassador and Secretary General of the Foreign Affairs Ministry, who exerted a unique moral authority among his colleagues, deemed that he could no longer continue collaborating with the Government and offered his resignation in very dignified terms. His departure created a stir in Vichy which turned out to be all the greater since Laval could find none within the ranks of the foreign service in whom he had enough confidence to trust as Charles-Roux's successor.

The commotion had been particularly acute in North

Africa. In order to reassure the population, General Weygand found it necessary to declare that "nothing contrary to the honor and the interests of France had been or could be subscribed to by a government whose chief was Marshal Pétain."

Despite the censorship, many newspapers succeeded in expressing, by indirect means but no less clearly, the criticisms of public opinion. The weekly *Candide*, usually of another tone, referred to peace possibilities only in so far as it took great care to recall the territorial claims of Germany and Italy against France. The anonymous author echoed the Marshal's words, denouncing the ideologies in which France had indulged before the war, but hastened to add: Let us not be seduced by the opposite ideologies. It is a matter of safeguarding the interests of the country, but "a policy is judged by its results, it is only approved when these results are advantageous and tangible. We are told that France must from now on preserve herself from all foreign meddling in her affairs. But this can only deal with the future, since at present the occupation and the activity of the German and Italian controllers constitute an unavoidable meddling." Here is finally the conclusion: "The war is not over. Any ambitious plan will necessarily be premature and precarious. . . . The future Europe presupposes the defeat or the collaboration of the Anglo-Saxons." Let us stop awhile to admire as we go along the ingeniousness of the newspaperman who utilizes the word "collaboration," put in vogue by Laval, to confer upon it an entirely different meaning. Instead of "collaboration," read "victory," and the meaning of the sentence becomes perfectly clear, especially if one bears in mind that the term "Anglo-Saxon" is used in France to designate not only the British Empire, but also the United States. No less clear is the closing paragraph: "Nothing is possible in France except in honor and in accord with patriotic feeling which has never been so unanimous in its wishes and in its hopes."

On October 31, 1941, just after Laval had left again for Paris,

Pétain broke the silence to give the French the "explanations" they were awaiting with anxiety. The Montoire meeting, said he, "has fostered hopes and provoked anxieties." He asserted that he had freely accepted "the invitation of the Führer," and that he had been submitted "to neither *Diktat* nor pressure." Then he again took up the precise terms of the communiqué, published the day after the interview by the Presidency of the Council, which fully indicates that these terms had been weighed by himself and with the greatest care: "A collaboration has been contemplated between our two countries. I have accepted its principle. The modalities will be discussed later." One could thus deduce that there would be no immediate change in Franco-German relations. It was only the beginning of an experiment whose developments remained impossible to foresee. "The first duty of every Frenchman is to be confident. It is in honor and to maintain French unity . . . that I start today on the path of collaboration."

To indicate clearly that this collaboration would be contained within narrow limits, the Marshal enumerated with care the concrete results which could logically, in his mind, derive from it: the condition of the prisoners could be improved, the burden of the occupation costs could be attenuated, the demarcation line could be eased, the administration and the supplying of the country could be rendered more practicable. This was all. And, at that, it could be secured only "through a patient and confident effort." We are taken far from the vistas of peace that some had presented in prospect hardly a few days before. France remained under the yoke of the armistice and, as the Marshal says, "the armistice is not the peace." These words were enough to pinch off in most definite fashion the hopes to which the Chief of State had alluded in the first sentence of his speech; but there was no word to calm the anxieties Marshal Pétain had evoked in the nation at the same time. Clearly feeling that these anxieties could not be reasonably appeased, he stiffened and concluded in these severe words: "It

is I alone whom history will judge. I have addressed you up to now as a father. Today, I address you as a chief. Follow me."

Moreover, on the same day, Deutsches Nachrichten Bureau, in a dispatch whose tone contrasts singularly with that of the statements published in Berlin the day after the Montoire interview, denied that Pétain and Hitler had reached "a formal accord." Through the Deutsches Nachrichten Bureau announcement could be glimpsed, moreover, certain of the conditions which had been laid down by the German side but which the Marshal, apparently, had not accepted: "Matters pertaining fundamentally to the future position of France in Europe were reviewed upon this occasion but from the standpoint, of course, of the fact that France is co-responsible for the present war which she has lost and for which she will have to stand the consequences. On both sides there exists not the slightest doubt upon this subject." The official Berlin agency then alluded to Franco-Spanish and Franco-Italian relations by underlining "the scope and serious character of the diplomatic activity by the Axis powers during the week that has just passed"—for Hitler had also met General Franco at Irún and Mussolini at Florence.

The Fascist press, in commenting upon the latter interview, made no bones about saying that "Germany and Italy maintained in their entirety the claims set forth at the beginning of the war regarding France and would give each other reciprocal assistance in the defense and the realization of these claims."

The Madrid newspapers used equivalent language after the Irún meeting, language which was, moreover, followed by action. Tangier, which had long been neutralized by international agreement because it commands at the same time access to Morocco and the strait of Gibraltar, had been militarily occupied in June by Spanish forces from Tetuán. The international administration of Tangier, instituted through treaties, was suspended November 4 by a decision of the Spanish Colonel Yuste, commander of the occupying troops. Some ten

days later the annexation, plain and simple, of Tangier to Spanish Morocco was proclaimed in Madrid. Spain, which had in June promised France and England to respect—and even to protect—the status of Tangier, showed clearly by these moves that she would not let herself be hampered by scruples of a juridical order in realizing, with Germany's consent, her program of territorial expansion in North Africa.

What had really taken place in Montoire? The documents I have just analyzed and supplemental information I was able to gather in Vichy during November lead me to think that Hitler lent himself to no discussion based upon future peace but formulated in imperative fashion the preliminary conditions to which the vanquished would have to submit before negotiations of wider scope could be opened. It was necessary, first of all, for France to take upon herself responsibility for the war just as Germany had been obliged to do at Versailles. She had to accept without reserve the Reich's leadership in the New Europe—leadership in political and military matters as well as in economic matters. It was necessary, moreover, that France's policy be led by men inspiring complete confidence in Germany and resolved to introduce National Socialism in France. Finally, France was to take the initiative in settling, through direct conversations, her difference with Italy, which had claims upon Tunisia, Corsica, Nice, and Savoy, and with Spain, which was asking part of Morocco and Algeria.

In other words, Hitler rigidly maintained the plan of action he had sketched June 22 at Rethondes in the proclamation read by General Keitel: While there is war, France can benefit from a certain independence and obtain certain concessions if this facilitates better exploitation of the German conquest. But, after the German victory, she will not be able to elude complete slavery.

To such conditions Marshal Pétain could evidently not subscribe without abandoning all he had proposed to preserve at the time of the armistice and thereafter; that is, the independ-

ence of his government, French unity, the moral principles of his National Revolution. The Montoire affair which had started with equivocation ended in failure. It was not possible, as people had been given to hope, to "pass from the state of armistice to the state of peace" by establishing Franco-German relations on more stable and better defined bases than those of the Rethondes convention. The Government of Vichy will not be able to elude this permanent dialogue with the occupying power, these daily discussions over the enforcement of the armistice terms in which the little independence it retains chips away bit by bit. The most potent result of Montoire is to have conferred a new name upon such a relationship—"collaboration." Germany alone benefits by it since this word masks under an honorable veil the progress of enslavement.

There was yet another result for which France had no reason to rejoice. Into the hands of Pierre Laval, along with the authority which clothes the Minister for Foreign Affairs, was put the continuance of Franco-German negotiations.

It soon became clear that the Vice President of the Council would not let himself be hindered in his path by the cautious reserve of Marshal Pétain. On October 31, at the very time when the Chief of State was declaring in Vichy that all the modalities of collaboration would be discussed later, Laval affirmed in Paris that, "on numerous points, precise questions have been set forth to which replies will soon be given." Laval added that collaboration would serve in a practical way "the interests of France, of Germany, and of Europe, in all fields and especially on the economic and colonial planes." Utilization, for the benefit of the German war effort, of the economic resources of Metropolitan France and the overseas territories was discussed, in fact, as early as November 9 and 10 by Laval and Göring. In these talks, Laval had the assistance of Fernand de Brinon, whom he had designated several days earlier to represent him in Paris with the rank of Ambassador to the German occupying forces—although the Government already had

in the capital a permanent delegation invested with the same mission and placed under the authority of General de La Laurencie.

The matter thus became one of pursuing a policy distinct from that of the Marshal, with Laval maintaining in the back of his mind the hope that the Marshal, faced by a *fait accompli* and under German pressure, would finally ratify the engagements subscribed to by his agent.

A fortuitous incident soon enlightened French public opinion on the way the Germans themselves intended to practice collaboration. On November 14, in Vichy, Raphaël Alibert, Minister of Justice, summoned representatives of the press to the Hôtel du Parc to read to them himself the following communiqué:

"The German authorities in Lorraine have just invited the French-speaking Lorrainers to choose between their transfer to Poland and their departure for unoccupied France. Our compatriots have chosen France. Since Monday November 11, their expulsion is being carried out at the rate of from five to seven trains daily.

"They have been told, certainly by people not duly authorized, that this measure was in conformity with an agreement reached between the French Government and the Government of the Reich.

"The French Government opposes the most categorical denial to this implication. A measure of this type has never been taken up in the Franco-German conversations. In relation to the facts themselves, the French Government has appealed to the German armistice commission."

The emotion in the whole of France, where the fate of the populations of Alsace and Lorraine was still generally unknown, was tremendous despite the fact that the official communiqué revealed only a small part of the truth. In fact, while the expulsions had become mass in November (six to seven thousand people a day), they had started immediately after

the armistice. (Pétain himself had alluded to these expulsions in his speech of October 10.) They had spread, not only to Lorraine, but also to Alsace; not only to the families who had no knowledge of German or rather of the German dialect in use in these provinces, but also to all those who demonstrated in any way their attachment to France. As to the option between deportation to Poland and expulsion to the Free Zone, there had been no such question. It was the German authorities who decided, according to circumstances or whim, the one or the other. There was, moreover, a third solution: internment in concentration camps, where many patriots have been subjected to inhuman treatment. For nearly five months, the Vichy Government had kept silence; and would have without doubt persisted in this attitude, to muffle in France all resentment against the victors, had it not been forced to explain the sudden arrival of trainloads of refugees in stations of the Free Zone.

On November 20, the French press published a brief communiqué: "M. Fernand de Brinon has informed M. Pierre Laval that the evacuation to France of certain Lorraine populations will be interrupted as of November 21. This communication has been made to him by Otto Abetz, speaking in the name of Gauleiter Buerckel."

But on November 30, Gauleiter Buerckel struck an entirely different note by declaring that the expulsions were not interrupted, but finished since all the French-speaking inhabitants had been transferred out of the annexed territory.

In this precise case rest Laval's duplicity and his pro-German zeal. Collaboration for Pierre Laval can mean only the best way for France to serve Germany. During those latter days of November, 1940, there was but one question which remained to be answered: How long and up to what point would Marshal Pétain allow Laval to pursue his game of treason?

VIII

The Fall of Laval

Who has made you king?

On Saturday December 14, at six o'clock in the evening, all the radio stations of the Free Zone and North Africa interrupted their usual programs to broadcast this brief announcement by Marshal Pétain:

Frenchmen:

I have just made a decision I judge to be in conformity with the best interests of the country. M. Pierre Laval no longer belongs to the Government. M. Pierre Etienne Flandin has been appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The constitutional act which designated my successor is annulled.

It is for important reasons of internal policy that I took it upon myself to make this decision which has not the slightest bearing on our relations with Germany. I remain at the helm. The National Revolution is being pursued.

The announcement of Pierre Laval's dismissal was considered by the great majority of the French people, regardless of social class or political opinion, as the most comforting news they had been privileged to hear in a long time. The departure of the man who wanted to bind the fate of vanquished France to that of her conqueror was in a certain measure the first step toward the still distant goal of liberation. Many a person who up to then had not dared display his feelings profited by this opportunity to declare openly what he thought of the policy of collaboration and of its sponsor. It was as

though there had been a return to the pre-armistice ways of democracy, a return to the days when each citizen used without fear his right to express himself freely.

The satisfaction, nearly unanimous though it was, was nevertheless accompanied by certain fears. The reasons behind the break between the Chief of State and his "designated successor" remained effectively shrouded in mystery. The Marshal had refrained from specifying them in his message. The communiqué, published on December 15 in the press, was marked by a similar discretion: it merely reaffirmed that the decision had been taken "for internal policy motives," that it aimed at giving the government "a more complete character of homogeneity," and, especially, that it did not imply "any change in our relations with Germany."

Even today, the precise circumstances of Pierre Laval's departure are only partly known, even in foreign countries. Those close to Marshal Pétain have remained studiously silent. The friends of Laval have taken pleasure in confusing matters by circulating various contradictory versions. The principal facts are, however, no longer mystery. In juxtaposition they can be readily understood, and I need complete them in only one or two spots by drawing upon my personal knowledge.

As early as the middle of November it was a secret to none in Vichy that Laval was complaining bitterly of the resistance his policy met from the personal staff of the Marshal and within the Government itself. Each time he returned from Paris to report on his dealings with the Germans, he first discussed matters in a talk with Marshal Pétain, who did not appear difficult to convince. But, when his activities came before the Council of Ministers, objections appeared in broad daylight, criticisms cropped up by the dozen, insinuations were made freely—to such an extent that no decision of importance could ever be reached and the Government remained, as always, faithful to the principle of Montoire collaboration without

making the slightest progress in its practical application. The Marshal ended each time by backing the opposition, and Laval had to leave again empty-handed for Paris.

The Vice President of the Council rapidly reached the conclusion that it was necessary to remove the Marshal from the pernicious atmosphere of Vichy and persuade him to return to Paris with his Government. Once back in the capital, in direct contact with the problems which arose daily in the relations with the German authorities, the Chief of State would more clearly understand collaboration and the necessities it entailed. He would no longer hesitate to get rid of several of his private councilors nor to eliminate from the Government the personalities whose enthusiasm in favor of a rapprochement with Germany was dubious.

Toward the end of November, the information services directed by Laval sponsored publication in the Free Zone newspapers of a series of articles representing return of the Government to occupied territory as an imminent eventuality. To guarantee free operation of the Government, the Germans had agreed—it was said—to evacuate Versailles and Paris districts such as the left bank of the Seine where most of the Ministries were located. The press went so far as to reproduce photographs of the private residence which had been selected for the Chief of State's stay in Versailles.

During the preceding months, Pétain had already set aside several similar projects because he believed that the conditions put forth by the Germans did not permit him sufficient independence. To end Marshal Pétain's vacillations, Laval judged that it was necessary to obtain from the Reich authorities a striking proof of their good will toward France.

Hitlerite propaganda circles had for some time been undertaking a curious campaign in the French-language press published under their control in Paris. Every opportunity was used by them to recall Franco-British rivalry at the time of Napoleon. They intended to prove that the French Emperor

had wanted to federate Europe and that, if this first attempt at continental organization had failed, it was the fault of England. On December 15, 1940, it would be one hundred years to the day since the ashes of the Emperor were brought back from St. Helena to Paris and deposited with much ceremony in the tomb of the Invalides. During the nineteenth century, the capital of France had known many a great day of enthusiasm, but none of these days had left in the people as vivid a memory as that of the return of the ashes of Napoleon. Thus it was found useful to exploit as only the Nazi propaganda could the centenary of this final episode of the Napoleonic saga. Why not turn it to profit by laying beside the ashes of the Emperor those of his son which rested in Vienna, in the crypt of the Capuchin church, among the tombs of the imperial Habsburgs? I do not know who sired this idea. Possibly it was Otto Abetz, but it was certainly no commonplace idea. This scheme, with the proper stage settings, might have had a measure of success with the Parisians in view of the emotion they have always displayed toward the touching story of the "Aiglon" and for the famous play by Edmond Rostand which popularized it.

For Pierre Laval it was, at any rate, a unique occasion to attract Marshal Pétain to Paris and associate him with an imposing Franco-German demonstration. From the way things turned out, it appears probable that the Chief of State, sounded out by Laval, had given reason to believe he might go. From that time on the Vice President of the Council strove in the greatest secrecy to prepare a weird plot in Paris. He wished to hear in the capital on December 15 spontaneous demonstrations by the people. Cries of, "Vive Pétain! Vive le Maréchal! Stay with us! Do not abandon your capital!" would break out all along the road traveled by the official procession. The crowd would naturally take up and amplify these acclamations. In order completely to assure Pétain, delegations presented to him by Laval would come one behind another to

beg him not to return to Vichy. Marshal Pétain, thus convinced of his popularity in the capital, would not dare to deceive his admirers and would rush directly to Versailles and settle down in the residence prepared for him. The rest would be easy. The ministerial reshuffling would not be long in taking place. The most notorious partisans of collaboration would make their entry into the Government, and Pierre Laval would become the real master of France's destiny.

The success of the plot depended, one can readily see, upon adequate organization of the spontaneous acclamations. They had to be numerous and well supported. Laval most naturally had in mind getting in touch with leaders of the Rightist and Extreme Rightist groups, from which the fifth column had already recruited several of its best agents. But, unfortunately, he forgot that there also existed among these men true patriots in whom a taste for order and authority had stifled neither national interest nor hatred of the invader. One of these men—I cannot use his name, for I learned these details from one of our mutual friends—rushed immediately to Vichy and personally informed the Marshal of the scheme being prepared in the capital.

The official version of the plot has, moreover, been exposed in documents which were not intended for publication, but of which many important functionaries have known. I reveal no secrets in referring to these documents because their existence has already been cited in several instances, especially in studies published in London. They were telegrams sent to all the French diplomatic missions by Foreign Minister Flandin, stating that the Vice President of the Council intrigued against the Chief of State, planning to relegate him to merely honorary functions in order to divert to himself all actual power.

When Laval returned to Vichy December 13, he had no idea of the reception which awaited him. Marshal Pétain ordered him to explain his attitude. According to reliable wit-

nesses, Laval answered: "I realize that, once more, your advisers have turned you against me. It is impossible for me to work in these conditions." Then he recalled that it was he, Laval, who had imposed the armistice by preventing the Government from fleeing to North Africa; it was he who had made of Pétain the most important figure of the State by obtaining the abdication of Parliament; it was he alone, finally, who had commanded the personal confidence of Hitler. He concluded with passion: "You imagine that you are something; but it is I who have made you and, without me, you are nothing. If I leave, it will not be long before you are overthrown."

One cannot help recalling another scene in France's history when Hugh Capet, who held his crown by the free choice of his peers and not by birthright, asking a rebellious vassal, "Who has made you a count?" received the retort, "Who has made you king?"

Marshal Pétain cut short the invectives of Laval by having him arrested and taken under escort to his castle of Châteldon and forbidding him to leave the grounds. This move was supervised in person by Minister of Justice Raphaël Alibert, who was known for his attachment to Pétain and had been very close to him for a long time. It was carried out by a detachment of the "groupes de protection" created several weeks earlier to repress all activities against the regime. Members of these groups had been recruited, in general, among petty officers of the career army who could not be maintained in service in the army of the armistice. Time had not yet sufficed to endow them with a uniform other than trench helmets and leather coats. It is thus that Laval, who had entered the Hôtel du Parc with proud bearing and a carefree salute for the sentries and orderlies who busily cleared a way through the people who impeded his steps, left the premises several hours later surrounded by huskies who made him scamper rapidly into a car under the astonished stares of the people.

There was no longer any question, of course, that the Marshal would go to Paris for the December 15 ceremony. He dispatched Admiral Darlan and General Laure to represent him. The popular enthusiasm on which Laval and his German friends had staked so much also failed.

The inhabitants of the capital disliked to see the remains of the Aiglon come back to France under his Austrian title of Duke of Reichstadt, and took malicious joy in referring to him by his Napoleonic title of "King of Rome."

At night the coffin was carried by the light of torches from the Gare de l'Est to the Invalides through deserted streets. Of the plot planned by Pierre Laval and Otto Abetz there remained only several bitter catch-phrases such as these which swept through Paris: "First the day of ashes; then the season of Lent and fasting"; "Keep your corpses and give us back our prisoners."

Meanwhile, the deliberations of the Government at Vichy were going on in an atmosphere of tenseness. Hitler had said in Montoire that he wanted the policy of France to be shaped by men in whom he had confidence. Would he therefore interpret the ousting of Laval as a gesture hostile to the Reich? Before leaving for Paris, Admiral Darlan had been commissioned to deliver to Abetz a personal message from the Marshal to the Führer in which Pétain made a great point of his anxiety to pursue the course charted first at Montoire.

One understands what Pétain meant by these words. It seemed logical to him to consider as null and void all that Laval had undertaken without his consent and often without his knowledge. Such matters had not been discussed at Montoire between himself and Hitler.

To collaborate was to negotiate with Germany toward obtaining a softening of the armistice regulations in exchange for other concessions, and such concessions could not be readily granted unless French public opinion was conditioned for them. The official communiqué of December 14 expressly

stated that the new Foreign Minister, Pierre Etienne Flandin, would be "more apt than his predecessor to pursue with the approval of public opinion a policy of rapprochement between Germany and France."

It had been hoped in Vichy that the choice of Laval's successor would please Berlin. In September, 1938, during the Czechoslovak crisis, Flandin had distinguished himself by plastering the walls of Paris with posters in which he denounced "the plot against peace." After Munich he had addressed a laudatory telegram to the Reich Chancellor. On November 15, 1940, before the press representatives of fourteen occupied departments at Dijon, he had strongly declared himself in favor of collaboration. But, on the other hand, during the National Assembly of July 10, 1940, he had been one of the few parliamentarians daring to speak in praise of liberty and warn the new regime against "servile imitation of foreign institutions." So he had earned the confidence of the Marshal, who had been careful to declare in his message of December 14, "The National Revolution continues," leaving people to gather from this statement that the personal policy of Laval had compromised its development.

The same concern is found in a declaration made December 15 at the closing of the Council of Ministers to announce the imminent creation of a consultative assembly. It was evidently a matter of leaning on public opinion which interpreted the dismissal of Laval as the defeat of the partisans of National Socialism in France and as a return to the French conceptions of state organization.

Another significant decision was the choice of Jacques Chevalier, Dean of the University of Grenoble, as new Minister of Public Instruction. Chevalier, one of the most eminent personalities of the intellectual Catholic world, had not been afraid, after the armistice, to praise publicly his venerated master, the philosopher Henri Bergson, although Bergson was of Jewish origin. One could rest assured he would

strive to preserve with all energy, in the schools of France, the traditions of liberty of the mind and respect for the truth.

Finally, the Marshal clearly indicated his intention to prevent in future any new intrigue directed, within the Government itself, against his authority. The December 14 communiqué specified that, by dismissing Laval, he had acted not only as Chief of the State, but also as Chief of the Government, and that there would no longer be a Vice Presidency of the Council. The information services included in it were reattached to the Presidency of the Council. So that none might covet the role of second personage of the State, Pétain, after annulling the act which designated Laval as his heir apparent, abstained from nominating another and gave the Council of Ministers the task of electing, if need be, a new Chief of State.

Laval's dismissal was thus followed by an extremely brief period of reaction against the personal policy of the former Vice President of the Council. The measures decreed by the Marshal December 14 and 15 to strengthen his authority only served to demonstrate, as early as December 16, how little authority he enjoyed. No decision could be taken in Vichy, even regarding interior organization of the French Government, without German approval.

During the evening of December 16, Abetz, as Reich Ambassador and personal delegate of the Führer in the Occupied Zone, made a sensational entrance in Vichy, in a car escorted by numerous German motorcyclists armed with sub-machine guns. It was a curious escort for a diplomat. One of the official Vichy propagandists, Jean Thouvenin, has discovered a remarkable euphemism to describe this entrance. "M. Abetz," says he, "was accompanied by a number of collaborators." The word "collaborator" can here assume an infinite variety of meanings. The following morning at ten, Abetz had a long talk with the Marshal, who afterwards kept him for lunch with Admiral Darlan, General Huntziger, and M. Paul Bau-

doin. The confidential document I have already referred to notes that the Chief of State informed the Reich Ambassador of the motives behind the dismissal of Laval. Without discussing these motives, Abetz insisted that Laval be reinstated immediately to all his former functions.

During the afternoon, Henri Dumoulin de la Barthète, chief of Marshal Pétain's civilian staff, had the dubious pleasure of picking up Laval at his Châteldon castle and bringing him back to the Hôtel du Parc. This new interview between Pétain and Laval was even stormier than that of December 13. A reliable source reports that Laval went so far as to insult the Marshal, showing no respect for his position, his glorious past, or his venerable age. The same confidential document indirectly confirms this, moreover, by indicating that, in the attitude of Laval during the interview, it became apparent that no reconciliation was possible between the two men. The document stated also that in no case would the Marshal recall Pierre Laval to power except under German compulsion. One can understand how Marshal Pétain could, three weeks later, confide to the American journalist Jay Allen that Laval inspired in him a profound revulsion, that he couldn't bear his physical presence, and that he had slept much better since getting rid of this "German agent."

Before leaving Vichy, Abetz once more insisted that Laval be recalled with the same authority as before. The Reich representative did not hide from Marshal Pétain that no Franco-German negotiation would be possible before this change was accomplished. Laval, freed, returned to Paris.

In the days that followed, Vichy strove in vain to make some arrangement with Berlin. In place of Laval, his alter ego, Fernand de Brinon, was designated as Delegate General of the Government in Paris to replace General de La Laurencie, and he was entrusted with all matters under the heading of Franco-German relations. On December 24, Admiral Darlan was delegated to visit the Reich Chancellor. He handed Hitler

a new personal message from Marshal Pétain. This message outlined once more the motives for Laval's dismissal and (I still use the same official document) made known that French policy would be from then on directed, under the authority of Marshal Pétain, by a triumvirate composed of Admiral Darlan, General Huntziger, and M. Flandin.

The Marshal concluded by stating that he remained faithful to the policy of collaboration with Germany, according to the conditions defined in Montoire, but that he intended to retain the choice of his Ministers.

This last statement was not very close to reality since Darlan's mission in Berlin was solely to solicit the Führer's agreement to a reorganization of the French Government. In the Reich capital, the Minister of the Navy got a personal reception which flattered him and caused him to be considered in Vichy *persona grata* to the Germans. But he was not able to bring back to Pétain any answer from Hitler, who is supposed to have contented himself with saying that the Marshal was perfectly free to arrange his Government as he saw fit, but that Germany, also, was free to grant or refuse her approval of such Government. Upon Darlan's insistence, the Führer is said to have promised to forward a written answer to the Marshal's message a little later, when he had had time to consider the matter and get the advice of his counselors.

Admiral Darlan was barely back in France when a small war of nerves started. At Moulins, sixty kilometers from Vichy, the Germans concentrated several tank battalions; and the rumor spread that occupation of the Free Zone was imminent. As fast as these rumors found echo in the foreign press, they were denied either by Vichy with indignation, or by Berlin with irony. A Swiss newspaper having said that diplomatic relations between France and Germany were on the verge of being broken, Wilhelmstrasse observed on January 2 that the two countries remained in a state of war since peace

had not yet been concluded and since, consequently, their relations could not be termed "diplomatic."

In order to interest the Germans in a resumption of collaboration, an economic committee was instituted in Vichy January 10 under the presidency of Flandin. This committee immediately listed France's offers and demands. Since the Free Zone was in dire need of coal and cereals, the committee proposed utilization of its industries to produce war material for Germany in exchange for these commodities.

Confronted with this suggestion, Abetz declared no economic conversation could be started—whatever the supply needs of the unoccupied territory—as long as the Marshal balked at reconciliation with Laval.

And so Marshal Pétain was obliged to submit to this humiliating demand. He displayed how loath he was to do it by meeting Laval, if one may say so, between trains, at the little station of La Ferté, not far from the border of the two zones. After the meeting, an official communiqué claimed that "the misunderstandings which had brought about the events of December 13 were entirely dispelled."

This done, the experts of Vichy were granted the so ardently desired permission to sit in Paris around the same table as the German experts and discuss the possibility of using a little of the products of France's soil in order to feed and heat the French in the Free Zone.

But the answer of the Führer to Marshal Pétain's message was still awaited. It reached Abetz February 1. Upon Fernand de Brinon's advice, Admiral Darlan left immediately for Paris to look at this document. At the same time, a renewal of the nerve war took place, in different form. A "National Committee for the Gathering of the People" constituted itself in the capital with the participation of most pro-Hitler groups. Commentaries inspired by the German propaganda services gave the people to understand clearly that this committee, on which figured, in particular, the collaborationist Marcel Déat and

the Cagouard Eugène Deloncle, could soon transform itself into a dissident government under the presidency of Laval. In relation to the Vichy Government, which pretended above all to maintain French unity, such a menace was a still more effective means of pressure than economic difficulties.

Upon his return to Vichy on February 5, Admiral Darlan gave an account to the Council of Ministers of Hitler's demands.

The Chancellor of the Reich subordinated the evolution of Franco-German relations to a reentry of Laval into the Government, without specifying the position Laval was to fill.

The very next day, Admiral Darlan again left for Paris to meet Pierre Laval. The object of his mission was divulged February 8 by an official Vichy communiqué in the following terms: "Marshal Pétain, Chief of the State, pursuing the policy of Montoire, has proposed to President Laval that he enter into the Government as Minister of State and member of a committee of directorship. President Laval has declined the offer of the Marshal."

Laval's refusal brought about, without delay, a reorganization of the government. Darlan, already Minister of the Navy, was successively made Minister of Foreign Affairs, Vice President of the Council, and heir apparent to Marshal Pétain.

A new experiment was begun, that of so-called collaboration on a limited scale, led by a man who had given proof during the past few weeks of his desire to inspire the Germans with confidence. If he succeeded in this task, at the price of concessions whose exact nature and extent were not yet known, the Marshal could dispense with recalling Pierre Laval and thus parting with the little authority he retained. In his last talk with Admiral Darlan, the former Vice President of the Council had effectively subordinated his return to Vichy to conditions which appeared at that time impossible to accept: He wanted to be named Chief of the Government, to have the

right to select his own Ministers and be invested with full powers for continuance of the policy of collaboration. It was, in fact, the program he had tried to impose upon the Marshal by the unsuccessful Paris plot—the same plot he was to take up again in April, 1942.

The crisis begun December 13 had thus demonstrated, on one hand, that Laval was really the man selected by Hitler to rule France in the interest of Germany and, on the other hand, that Marshal Pétain could prolong the fiction of independence of his Government only by selecting to direct it, in the absence of Laval, the person who inspired the most confidence in the Reich Chancellor.

IX

Darlan

To collaborate is to avoid the worst.
—MARSHAL PÉTAIN

In exhorting the French to collaborate, Marshal Pétain listed upon several occasions—particularly in his November 30, 1940, speech after Montoire—the main advantages the country was to derive from such a course. It was especially a matter, as we have seen, of improving the condition of the prisoners, of freeing the greatest possible number of them, of facilitating supply, of lightening the financial burden imposed by the armistice, and softening the interzone communications regulations. Finally—and this was collaboration's ultimate aim—it was necessary to inspire confidence in the victor in order to win him over to a peace of reconciliation which would leave France nearly untouched.

To achieve these aims, the Marshal was prepared to grant Hitler very far-ranging concessions. He had, however, indicated the limit of the concessions, at least indirectly, by formulating these three principles: honor forbids France to bear arms against her former ally; adherence to the new European order must not interfere with the National Revolution; Franco-German rapprochement must be gradual in order not to surpass what French public opinion is prepared, at the successive stages, to understand and accept.

The experiment which was carried on from June, 1940, to February, 1941, convinced the Chief of State that, under the unremitting pressures exerted on him by Germany, it would be extremely difficult to have the definitions thus set up by him respected. To resist these pressures and maintain the equilibrium of his policy, it was necessary for him to find in

France and abroad solid supports which were not likely to crumble.

These supports were: the fleet commanded by Admiral Darlan, North Africa in General Weygand's care, and the Franco-American friendship which linked France to a free world where Germany could not impose her rule.

The strength of the first support derived much more from the personal qualities of Admiral Darlan than from the number, tonnage, and fire power of French naval units. Admiral Darlan had an extraordinary influence over his officers, who were devoted to him to the point of fanaticism. Putting him at the head of the Government was thus a sure way of obtaining for the regime the support, without reservation, of an elite of energetic and disciplined men accustomed to issuing orders and ready to accept for themselves all sacrifices they imposed on their subordinates. The body of French Navy officers was thus used to reinforce the influence of Darlan by furnishing to the French State prefects, colonial administrators, police chiefs, and, as a last resort, diplomats and economists. Their devotion to duty replaced professional qualifications and technical competence. Other dictatorships rely on the cohesion of a single party; Darlan's dictatorship was to have as a base the presence of naval men in certain key positions.

If Darlan had such prestige among his officers, it was because, before the war, he had made the French fleet a powerful and modern weapon of war. Almost all his career has been in the offices of the Admiralty. Whatever the party in power, he always succeeded in winning over to his views the politicians who succeeded one another at the head of the Navy Ministry. To achieve such results, not only exceptional technical qualities and great perseverance but great tact were necessary. Darlan's success can be explained, in great measure, by his knowledge of politics—a trait not frequently found in the Navy. His father had been a parliamentarian. Thus, in his youth, he had had associations that proved to be very

useful to him later on, and began to develop skill in playing upon men's vanity or personal interest. Dwelling in the ante-chambers of power and endowed with a robust ambition, he was led, quite naturally, to desire the highest office for himself some day. This background fitted him well for the role Marshal Pétain entrusted to him.

Another trait of Darlan's character is his stubbornly anti-British attitude which had not waited for June, 1940, to reveal itself strikingly. A certain amount of distrust for the British was traditional in the French Navy, even after the Entente Cordiale. But Darlan went far beyond this stage. His frequent contacts with the British Admiralty before the war only helped to strengthen his dislike for all that came from London. The Anglo-German 1935 naval agreement in particular had inspired in him a burning resentment. These anti-British tendencies, which had spurred him to the most violent utterances after the incidents at Mers-el-Kébir and Dakar, constituted his chief claim to Hitler's confidence. And also for this reason Marshal Pétain judged that, after Laval's dismissal and Flandin's failure, none was better qualified than Darlan to conduct the policy of collaboration.

Scarcely had he taken power when Admiral Darlan was to compose his Government in such a way that Vichy's good will could not be questioned in Berlin. All the Ministers who had impeded Laval's influence were eliminated one after another. Paul Baudoin resigned as early as January 3. Raphaël Alibert followed him January 28. Interior Minister Marcel Peyrouton was obliged to resign February 16 and was appointed Ambassador to Argentina. Darlan, who already headed two other departments, assumed Peyrouton's, which gave him direct authority over the police. At the same time, he ordered dissolution of the "Groupes de Protection" which had carried out the arrest of Pierre Laval December 13. Their chief, Colonel Groussard, was placed under surveillance before being arrested several months later. After a campaign by the Paris

press, Jacques Chevalier was obliged to abandon the Ministry of Public Education. He was found guilty of having authorized the teaching of the Catechism in schools on holidays, which evidently was unbearable from a Nazi viewpoint.

The list of new Ministers and Secretaries General contained the names of distinguished collaborationists, among them Paul Marion, former lieutenant of Jacques Doriot, who was placed at the head of the information services, and Jacques Benoist-Mechin, who was to assist Admiral Darlan in the negotiations with Germany. And the entry into the Government councils of Pierre Pucheu, as State Secretary for Industrial Production, and of Jacques Barnaud, as Delegate General for Franco-German Economic Relations, testified that the main task of the new set-up would be to put France's economy more and more at the disposal of the German war effort. Both men maintained close contacts with a group of financiers who, before the war, had encouraged Nazi maneuvers in France and, since the armistice, had taken its own large share of the profits of economic collaboration. The influence of this group within the Government was to grow continuously from then on although Marshal Pétain declared one day that he wanted to rid the country "of the most despicable tutelage: that of money."

One is led to feel that the efforts by Darlan to win the approbation of the invader were still inadequate since the Cabinet thus formed had to be reshuffled in four different instances in the six months which followed. Such frequent changes in Government personnel were denounced, before 1939, by the right-wing press as one of the most serious infirmities of the Parliamentary regime; but one was to witness, in 1941, that the whim of the conqueror is a far more dangerous element of instability.

It is striking to notice that, in fact, each of these transformations took place after a trip of Admiral Darlan to Paris. Each, also, reinforced the collaborationist elements. Thus Pierre Pucheu became Interior Minister July 18 with the job of

energetically quelling sabotage in the factories and all other forms of resistance to Germany.

The unshakable resistance of French opinion is, as one knows, the main obstacle to the development of collaboration. In numerous speeches, Admiral Darlan and Marshal Pétain himself strove to win over the French people to their policy by playing up either the advantages France might derive from an understanding with the Reich or the grievances she had against England.

On May 15, the Chief of State declared that, if the Franco-German negotiations materialized, "France would be in a position to overcome her defeat and maintain her rank as a European and colonial power." To the patriots reluctant to follow him, Pétain asserted that the path he was following was "that of honor and the country's interest." On May 23, Admiral Darlan declared that Germany had never asked France to yield her fleet or her colonies nor to bear arms against Great Britain. "Collaboration with the Reich," said he, "is for France a matter of life or death. Marshal Pétain has chosen life." On June 10, he once more pretended that there was no other opportunity for salvation, and that, if French public opinion did not give this policy its free support, it would be impossible to avoid a "disastrous peace." On August 12, the Marshal, adding seduction to menace, invited his listeners to consider "the broad perspectives which a reconciled continent could open to our activity."

Attacks against Great Britain held, at the same time, a very important position in official propaganda. Since it might be difficult to make the French people like Germany, it was hoped that it might prove somewhat easier to make them hate England. On May 31, in a long speech of extreme violence, Admiral Darlan accused the British of having tried their best to weaken France after the common 1918 victory and to precipitate it again into war in 1939 when "the rebirth of German strength appeared as a unifying factor of the European con-

tinent." In other words, in Darlan's opinion, France should have opposed no armed resistance to Hitlerian domination in Europe.

In the same speech, the Chief of the French Navy tried to prove that, since the armistice, France had suffered more at England's hands than at Germany's. He argued, in particular, that the destruction, seizures, or immobilization of French merchant ships, for which the blockade was directly or indirectly responsible, amounted to approximately three hundred thousand tons, represented a total value of twenty billion francs and a sum greater than that paid to Germany for occupation costs. By preventing France from participating in the new European order, he stressed, England wants "to stop us from maintaining the unity of our territory and the integrity of our Empire." "If British Imperialism," says he in addition, "needs a war to destroy Europe, France needs peace to live and grow as one of the essential parts of this Europe." Finally, he scoffed at the hopes of those who still believed in the final defeat of Germany, holding it "ridiculous" to suppose that Paris could one day be freed by the British. "In the more than unlikely event of a British victory," France would certainly be enslaved by Anglo-Saxon imperialism.

The problem was, as one can see, to convince the French that the triumph of Hitler was unavoidable, and that, all things considered, it would be for them a matter worth rejoicing over. The effect of these diatribes on public opinion was rather slight since Marshal Pétain was obliged to note, in bitter terms, in his message of August 12 that there was "a real uneasiness" in the country, and that "an atmosphere of intrigue and of false rumor" was splitting opinion, prevented reconciliation with the victor, and impeded progress of the National Revolution, "which has not yet become a fact."

Those partial to the Pétain-Darlan regime have frequently held that one must not attach undue importance to this oratory. The true object of these statements, they explain, was

to pay Germany in words to avoid having to pay her in deeds. But their explanations do not hold under the impact of facts. An objective analysis of the activities of the Vichy Government leads one to conclude that there was a close relationship between the words and the deeds.

This is particularly true in the field of economics. Admiral Darlan could flatter himself, it is true, for having obtained a substantial cut in the occupation costs three months after his assumption of power. These costs, which had been set at 20,000,000 marks per day—400,000,000 francs—at the time of the armistice, were lowered to 300,000,000 francs starting May 11, 1941. But this concession was nothing but a deception. Germany had obliged Vichy, on the other hand, to grant her a clearing agreement in November, 1940, which allowed her to buy all she pleased in France without paying a cent. After several months of operation, the balancing of the clearing accounts showed a 12,000,000,000-franc deficit in favor of the Reich. This deficit has unremittingly swelled ever since. Moreover, Germany utilizes only in part the account opened in her behalf in the Bank of France for occupation costs. On December 31, 1941, the credit balance of this account amounted to 64,000,000,000 francs. If the victor does not use in full the sum he obtained, it is because he has set it at such an exaggerated level that it surpasses by far, not only the actual expenses of the occupying army, but also the capacity of the vanquished to foot the bill.

Germany could thus have accepted, without being disturbed, an even greater cut in the financial burden she imposed on France at the armistice.

But—and this is a good example of Vichy's inability to defend the French positions effectively—the illusory advantages obtained in this matter by Admiral Darlan had to be paid for by forsaking the relative independence that the Free Zone and the French overseas territories had maintained until then in their financial and commercial relations with foreign coun-

tries. After May 20, 1941, these relations were closely supervised and regulated by a German commissioner operating in Vichy. All matters pertaining to foreign exchange and trade were under his control.

France's industry was wholly dependent upon Germany's good will. The distribution of raw materials, fuels, and means of communication was taken in hand by German agents, and factories could thus operate only by fitting themselves into the programs established by the occupation authorities. This was true not only in the Occupied Zone but also in the Free Zone. Thus there was not, in fact, a single industrial enterprise of any importance in the Free Zone which did not depend directly or indirectly upon the Occupied Zone for raw materials, machine tools, or power or because it was controlled from Paris by stocks whose majority was acquired by the Germans through means I have already explained in Chapter V. The "corporativism" fostered by Vichy merely helped regiment the nation's production by interposing official French delegates between the German offices which ruled and the French industrialists who complied.

Industrial control brought, as its consequence, control of labor. Germany tried to lure to her soil the greatest possible number of specialized workers from the countries she occupied; and, as she regulated all the production means, it was easy for her to create unemployment where and when she wished, to cause French workers to offer her their services for hire. In November, 1941, the Paris radio estimated at 100,000 the number of those who accepted jobs in factories of the Reich. Nazi pressure grew steadily thereafter.

Vichy succeeded no better in safeguarding the supply of the country. In the Unoccupied Zone as well as in the Occupied Zone, the rations of bread, meat, sugar, fats, potatoes, and other staples represented only an average 1,200 calories while the normal consumption was 2,500 calories before the war. The balance could be provided only by the non-rationed

goods, that is to say, essentially by green vegetables and fruits with which the city markets were as a rule very poorly provided. At the current rate, 1,300 calories of non-rationed products cost 35 francs, a far greater sum than a salaried man could spare for his daily food.

Moreover, before the armistice, France had produced very nearly all the foodstuffs necessary for the subsistence of its population. The country's agriculture was protected, often excessively, against foreign import competitors. The yield of the soil considerably diminished after that because of the absence of the prisoners who, for the most part, were peasants, and because of the increasing shortage of all the products used for cultivation, especially fertilizers. But, according to well informed and reliable sources, this diminution in the agricultural production did not seem to be any greater than approximately 30 per cent. The very short food rations can thus be explained only by the exactions made by Germany for her own benefit. Try as he might, the Frenchman had no hope of improving his food situation. Any surplus above the very minimum necessary to keep him working was automatically confiscated by Germany.

In spite of all, Admiral Darlan was not afraid, in several instances, to accuse the British blockade of starving France. It is known that, after the armistice, the French merchant marine could no longer operate except under German control and with the delivery of an important part of the products transported to Germany. Such a situation was bound to provoke a certain number of cases of seizure or stoppage of French cargoes by British warships. Each of these cases brought violent protests from Admiral Darlan and threats of reprisal. On March 10, 1941, the Vice President of the Council, having voiced his determination to defend the French Empire against all attacks, stated with precision that the Empire's defense involved not only the overseas territories, but also the maritime routes which united the colonies to Metropolitan

France. "To allow our boats to be captured," said he, "would be to condemn the French to starve to death." He concluded by stating his intention to convoy merchant boats with warships, so as to protect them from the British.

Had this menace been carried out systematically, France would have been irremediably dragged into war against Great Britain. But this was an eventuality which Marshal Pétain wished to avoid at all cost. It was thus necessary during the ensuing months to display considerable ingenuity in order to satisfy German requirements without exposing French ships to an open conflict with the British fleet. Each time an incident occurred, the Vichy spokesmen pretended that England wanted to prevent France from securing overseas the food supplies she needed. At the end of March, four freighters from Casablanca had to seek refuge in the Algerian port of Nemours from a British patrol. The French Admiralty in an official communiqué protested vigorously against this "aggression," arguing that the cargo consisted only of foodstuffs. But it soon became known that one of the vessels had landed at Casablanca three thousand tons of rubber from Indo-China which was afterwards reexported from Oran to Marseilles for delivery, at least in part, to industries working on Germany's behalf.

Several months later, another ship, the *François-Louis Dreyfus*, which also carried rubber from Indo-China, ran the blockade under the Japanese flag for most of the trip. At the beginning of November, 1941, the seizure of five ships off Durban caused new protests from Vichy where it was pretended that these boats were merely loaded with foodstuffs from Madagascar. In truth, they carried also graphite, hides, and oil grains, all badly needed in Germany. Moreover, among the passengers were twenty-eight German nationals who had served in the Foreign Legion in Indo-China. These examples show that economic collaboration had to put at

Germany's disposal the resources of the French overseas territories so far as transportation could be worked out.

Admiral Darlan was thus not satisfied to wish for Germany's victory. He strove also to promote it actively when the opportunity presented itself. The Syrian affair was to furnish the most obvious proof of this. At the beginning of May, Darlan, on his way to Berchtesgaden to meet Hitler, stopped in Paris, where Fernand de Brinon made it clear to him that the Germans needed the Syrian air fields to rescue the Iraqi rebels who had been fighting for several days against British forces. Darlan—without, it seems, notifying Marshal Pétain—authorized Jacques Guérard, former collaborator of Paul Baudoin, to leave for Beirut with secret instructions to General Dentz, High Commissioner for France in the Levant. These instructions said the Luftwaffe might use several air fields within the country as relays by establishing refueling and repair bases.

Forrest Davis and Ernest K. Lindley, in their recent book "How War Came," based on official American documents, assert that of thirty German planes which reached Iraq, at least fourteen had landed in Syria to refuel; that is to say, three Messerschmitt 110's, three Junkers, four Condor troop transports, and four Heinkel 115 bombers. In violation of international law these German planes bore Iraqi colors.

This is not all. According to an inquiry on the spot by the Free French authorities, sixty-six fighting planes and forty troop transport planes utilized—some for several trips—the airports of Mezzé, Palmyra, and Nerab. On this last field the Germans installed workshops and cantonments. Some three hundred Luftwaffe uniforms and matériel were seized there by Allied troops.

What is infinitely more serious, General Dentz, under the instruction of German agents in Syria, sent to Iraq from May 12 to 27, four trains loaded in the following way: 66 gasoline tank trucks filled with airplane fuel, 755 tons of arms and

ammunition, two batteries of 75-millimeter guns, and a battery of 155-millimeter guns.

It was argued in Vichy that the armistice commission had rights to this matériel. The point is debatable. If this transfer had to do with stocks seized by the Germans by virtue of the Rethondes convention, the Germans would have seized it purely and simply, without paying any indemnity. However, a purchase was made. The matériel was estimated at 120,000,000 francs. An 85,033,000-franc account in currency of the Banque de France was paid June 3 to the Beirut Treasury Department. But this is of little importance since General Dentz, to aid Germany, resorted to treachery. These trains were to cross Turkish territory on their journey and to re-enter Syria before reaching Iraq. The Ankara Government, careful to observe its neutrality obligations, would have forbidden their transit if General Dentz had not guaranteed that they were intended for French garrisons on the Iraq frontier.

The Iraqi insurrection was quelled despite this, and the Allied armies finally occupied Syria. From June 8 to 12, a fratricidal war took place among former companions-in-arms, while Vichy strove to make the French believe that the only Germans in Syria were the crews of several disabled planes which had luckily reached Syrian airports.

French public opinion was still more poorly informed if such a thing is possible, on the Indo-Chinese crisis of July. In full agreement with Germany, which had started hostilities against Russia June 21, Japan was preparing to start war in the Pacific area on its own timetable, and it needed for this effort the secure occupation of several bases in the French Far Eastern territories. Negotiations were opened at Vichy July 17. They could not be kept completely secret since, after the Government had decided to defend Syria against a so-called "British aggression," it would have been difficult to make the French people accept the delivery of Indo-China to Japan without a struggle. It was thus necessary to decoy them

into the net. The press and the radio pursued this aim with great cleverness, as one can judge by this summary of the news published during the critical period:

July 18: There is nothing to indicate any modification whatever in Franco-Japanese relations. Tokyo has recognized the full sovereignty of France over Indo-China.

July 22: The conversations taking place do not go beyond the limits of agreements already in existence.

July 23: Japan has proffered various measures with a view to maintaining order in Eastern Asia, but such demands can be taken into consideration only in so far as the rights of France and her sovereignty in Indo-China will not be compromised.

July 27: It is necessary to find for our far-away colonies a regime which takes into consideration the necessities entailed in their defense.

July 29: Admiral Darlan and the Japanese Ambassador have reached an agreement on measures to be taken to insure in common the defense of Indo-China.

July 30: The Japanese have occupied Saïgon.

One grasps clearly the procedure used to falsify the news and to woo public opinion, a procedure Hitler has used so often and with such success to cover up his enterprises. The theme of the "common defense" of Indo-China was, however, in gross contradiction to the principle formulated March 10 in an official communiqué from Vichy, in which it was stated that the territories of the Empire would be defended against all aggression "by the French forces alone."

Hardly had the Japanese become installed in Saïgon when they began to behave as if they were the masters. In a letter dated October 8, one of the closest collaborators of Admiral Jean Decoux, Governor General of Indo-China, wrote: "The Nipponese military give all their requests a threatening character. Multiple incidents result from this state of affairs. The overbearing attitude of the Japanese does not cease to be troublesome despite existing agreements and with no respect

for French sovereignty although that has been solemnly confirmed. It is clear that the Japanese acts are directed toward evicting us from the colony. Tension has become such that all negotiation is impossible or fruitless." So this was what Vichy meant by "the defense of the French Empire."

The Russo-German war, indirect cause of Japan's ascendancy in Indo-China, was to bring strange repercussions in France itself. Immediately after the armistice, the Government of Marshal Pétain had adopted a resolutely hostile attitude toward Communism. It had declared itself in many instances in favor of establishing the New Order in Europe. How could it resist the appeal of Germany, which wanted to form a European coalition against Bolshevism? But to participate in the war against Russia would lead inevitably to fighting Great Britain. And so Vichy was at first satisfied to break its diplomatic relations with Moscow June 30. This half-measure failed to satisfy either the Germans or the extremists of Paris. The "French Popular Party" of Jacques Doriot and some former Cagoulaards grouped around Eugène Deloncle soon took the initiative in forming a group of volunteers called the "Anti-Bolshevik Legion."

Nothing could have caused more apprehension or embarrassment in Vichy. An armed militia under Doriot's and Deloncle's orders would constitute a grave menace for the National Revolution. Who knew if the chiefs of this militia, instead of departing for the Russian front, would not first be tempted to impose their own policy upon Marshal Pétain? But it was impossible to prevent the formation of this militia without opposing Germany openly, and recruiting of the Anti-Bolshevik Legion was thus authorized. Government employees were allowed to enlist with a promise that their jobs would be waiting for them at the end of the campaign. Doriot and Deloncle failed on but one point: they did not obtain for their volunteers the right to wear the French uniform. The necessity of wearing a German Army uniform dampened the

anti-Communist zeal of a great many Legionnaires. Finally, representatives of the Reich agreed that the militia would not be supplied with weapons until it had left French territory. This having been settled, Marshal Pétain consented to declare, in his speech of August 12, that "Germany was fighting in the East for civilization."

Pretending to take part in the "European struggle against Bolshevism," the police services under Admiral Darlan and Pierre Pucheu undertook later in June what was termed "the purging of Communistic circles."

In accordance with a strategy which had already been utilized successfully in Germany, the term "Communists" was used to designate without distinction all those who, regardless of their convictions, were suspected of participating in active resistance against the invader. Thus, during the arrests carried out in the Free Zone during July, not only were extreme leftists rounded up, but also right-wing journalists and even officers, several of whom had belonged to the staff of Marshal Pétain or that of General Weygand.

These coercive measures merely resulted in provoking a recrudescence of terrorist acts against the Germans in the Occupied Zone or their accomplices.

On August 27, Laval and Déat were wounded by several pistol shots at Versailles. The Hitlerite press of Paris pretended the author of the attack, Paul Colette, was a Communist. But the joint investigation by the Gestapo and the police of Vichy led to a conclusion impossible to hide: the young Frenchman had never had anything to do with any left-wing organization.

It is known that, in order to discourage resistance, the Germans resorted early in September to the barbaric method of executing hostages. It is less well known that Vichy had offered to take upon itself the repression by instituting in Paris on September 9 a "State Tribunal" to "judge the instigators of all anti-national activity." Of the fourteen members of the

tribunal, only two were former magistrates, the others being "selected freely by the Government."

The findings of this special court were retroactive, and its verdict could not be appealed. Such an innovation in a country like France, where the rights of the defense had always been considered sacred under all regimes, showed clearly how intoxicated Vichy was by Hitlerian concepts. On October 4, an Havas communiqué proclaimed that "the French authorities desire to assume the entire responsibility for the repression which will be necessitated in the Occupied Zone by new acts contrary to the right and the security of the occupying forces." But these disgraceful offers of service were snubbed by the Germans, who felt that terrorist methods would be applied much more efficiently by themselves. However, they accepted the aid of Vichy agents in drawing up hostage lists, notably in the case of the twenty-seven French patriots who were shot at Châteaubriant October 22, 1941.

The balance of the profits Germany derived from collaboration in 1941 is all too easy to strike. The partisans of the New Order took command in Vichy. French public opinion was snowed under news and commentaries favorable to the Reich and hostile to England. National economy was exploited to the limit for Germany's benefit and under German direction. The flag of the French merchant marine was used to protect contraband colonial products destined to sustain the Axis war effort. The overseas possessions in Syria and Indo-China were used to facilitate the aggressions of Hitler and his Japanese partner in Syria and in Indo-China. Finally, the police force of Admiral Darlan and Pierre Pucheu put itself at the Gestapo's disposal for the persecution of French patriots.

In exchange for all this support, which had nothing to do with the obligations contracted in the armistice, what advantages did Vichy obtain for the French people?

Supply was not improved. On the contrary, it became more

and more precarious. If the Free Zone received various food-stuffs from the Occupied Zone, it was forced to pay for them by delivering other products. Germany continued to exact all she could and left for the French barely enough to escape starvation on their own fields, which are among the richest of Europe.

The burden of the financial charges did not vary although their distribution was modified. The demands of the victors had no limit except the ability of the vanquished to pay.

Regulations regarding the demarcation line retained their rigidity. The forbidden zone remained subtracted from Vichy's authority, although Admiral Darlan and several of his ministers were permitted to visit that region several times in the early fall in order to make menacing speeches against the advocates of resistance to Germany.

During the first days of October, an official communiqué from Vichy set at more than 500,000 the number of refugees obliged to remain in the Free Zone because the occupying forces did not allow them to return to their homes. The Occupied Zone at that time contained more than 300,000 other refugees forbidden to return to the northern and eastern departments.

As for the prisoners, an Havas bulletin dated September 17 stated that 1,500,000 of them still remained in German prison camps. The freeing of prisoners by the victor affected but three categories: those whose health was precarious, those over forty-one, and those who could be used in France or North Africa in activities useful to Germany.

Had Marshal Pétain's Government, during that period at least, been allowed to pursue what it termed its "work for the recovery of the country," by developing its National Revolution program? Not in the least! Committees were established for the study of the future constitution. They managed merely to add new reports to files already deep in dust. The only achievement of any importance was the promulgation

in October of the "Labor Charter," which, under color of being "corporativist," put an end to the liberties and guarantees which had finally been bestowed to workers under the Third Republic.

It is thus perfectly clear that all the benefits of collaboration had been benefits for Germany, and that all the burdens had fallen upon France without any possibility of France easing her miseries. This "path of honor," to use the Vichy nomenclature, was marked by concessions, humiliations, and acts detrimental to the permanent interests of the nation.

Marshal Pétain is reported to have declared one day, "To collaborate is to avoid the worst." It is possible that he harbored this illusion the day after Montoire. In truth, the worst was not avoided. It was merely delayed. Each month, each week, each day, it was necessary for the French to resign themselves to an aggravation of the Hitler tyranny. A year after Montoire, the only thing the Marshal had been able to safeguard was the façade of his regime. It remains to be seen how this last vestige of independence also finally collapsed.

X

Weygand

In time of war, he who surrenders is my enemy, whoever he may be, from wherever he may come, and whatever his political party.
—CHARLES PÉGUY

Among the uncertainties and the contradictions of Vichy, the personality of General Weygand has always aroused a very deep interest outside France and particularly in the United States. However, despite the interest shown in each of his actions and his words, his attitude in the successive crises which marked the evolution of the Pétain regime has not always been precisely understood. Often it has even been called an outright enigma. I do not pretend to give a complete explanation of the Weygand case, for too many elements are still lacking. But, if one sets known facts in order, the personality of the former Generalissimo appears at once less mysterious and not quite as simple as it has usually been represented.

First of all, Weygand is, like Pétain, a man whose career reaches back from the defeated France of 1940 to the victorious France of 1918. It was natural that he who had been the most intimate colleague of Foch should be, in the eyes of the French people, the foremost heir to his glory. Foch himself had said some time before his death: "When I am gone, if the nation is in danger, call Weygand." As Foch had foreseen, the day came when the nation was invaded once more and it was Weygand who was called as the battle raged to take the armies in hand. But this name, which had prematurely been considered a synonym for victory, was to become tragically associated with the most crushing defeat at arms ever suffered by the French.

In exactly what measure can Weygand be held responsible for this defeat? History will reckon, without much doubt, that

he showed unusual abnegation by accepting the responsibility of leading military operations after the Sedan disaster, that is to say at a time when the situation was more than imperiled. But it will also say, without doubt, that the French Army of May, 1940, was to a great extent what Weygand made it.

Between the two wars, nobody—except perhaps Marshal Pétain—had exercised so lasting an influence upon French High Command doctrine and the technical preparedness of the army. None was so unanimously respected. From November, 1924, to January, 1930, General Weygand directed the Paris center of advanced military studies familiarly referred to as “the School for Marshals.” Until January, 1935, he was Chief of the General Staff, Vice President of the Supreme Military Council, and Inspector General for the Army. It is impossible today to obtain free access to the documents which would reveal with precision Weygand’s personal actions during this period of more than ten years. Specialists in military matters may usefully devote themselves to that research after the war, when partisan passions have died down and truth again has found a place in France.

But, pending a judgment by specialists, men of good faith can form a reasonable picture with certain facts whose importance and significance cannot be disputed.

In particular, how can one forget that in 1934, with Gaston Doumergue as President of the Council, Marshal Pétain as Minister for National Defense, and General Weygand as Chief of the General Staff, the credits allowed by the Parliament for war matériel were at the Government’s demand reduced from 600,000,000 francs to 400,000,000? And that year, 1934, was precisely the one in which Hitler had publicly proclaimed his intention to rearm the Reich. Moreover, this rearming had been really started the preceding year, and there was no room for illusion on this matter in Paris. I was stationed in Munich from March to December, 1934, and I know that reports of French agents in Germany allowed not the slightest doubt as

to the scope and seriousness of the military and industrial effort undertaken by the National Socialist regime. During 1934, while the Reichswehr was having its first three armored divisions forged, Marshal Pétain and General Weygand felt it was enough to order 7 modern tanks, 132 armored cars, and 180 antitank guns from French factories.

Economy and the budget triumphed over every other consideration. For the socially conservative Government of Doumergue—which was not reactionary enough to suit the taste of General Weygand—the defense of the franc was more important than the defense of the nation's borders.

In that year, in which one can see the dual beginnings of Nazi might and French defeat, Colonel de Gaulle published "*Vers l'Armée de Métier*" (Toward a Professional Army) expounding his prophetic views on the employment of armored and motorized forces in modern warfare. But, in that very period, General Weygand disdained Colonel de Gaulle's conceptions and strictly enforced the views of the French High Command, which were based on the experience of World War I. He was especially opposed to formation of a mechanized army of professional soldiers which would have to be recruited among industrial workers, most of whom sympathized with the left-wing parties. He feared that such an army might one day become a factor for social revolution. Instead, he publicly advocated recruiting of the "Mobile Guards," a group with no military value in modern combat but a strong arm behind the police in case of internal disturbances.

If the French Army was unable in 1940 to make up for its numerical inferiority through superiority of equipment and training, the initial responsibility thus belongs to General Weygand. Neither the teachings of the Poland campaign, nor even the first disasters suffered in Belgium and in Northern France succeeded in convincing Weygand that he had been wrong in blocking the mass use of motorized units. At the end of May, 1940, he was still saying to Paul Reynaud, of General

de Gaulle: "His opinions are of no importance. He is a child."

The personal responsibility of General Weygand in connection with the armistice is no less evident. On June 10, 1940, when the last continuous line of resistance was smashed on the Somme and the Aisne, the Commander in Chief judged that the disaster was beyond repair, that the only way out was to lay down arms. At the Council of Ministers June 12 near Tours in the castle of Cangé, he did not hide that he believed in the capitulation of Great Britain, that he feared a Communist uprising in France, that he wanted to stop the struggle in order to keep at least several divisions capable of enforcing law and order. He even went so far as to pretend, on the strength of reports by Admiral Darlan's General Staff, that unrest had already flared up in Paris. This piece of news, with no basis in fact, was immediately denied after a telephone conversation between Interior Minister Georges Mandel and the Paris Prefect of Police. Weygand insisted, none the less, that capitulation was necessary to prevent a revolution. There is thus no doubt that his attitude in those tragic hours was mainly determined by considerations of a political order.

These considerations betrayed, moreover, a surprising ignorance of the European realities because the triumph of National Socialism then represented for French civilization and for Christianity an infinitely more serious—and closer—danger than the Moscow bugbear.

The military regulations of the French Army declare that the leader is guilty of treason who capitulates without having exhausted all means of resistance. Partisans of the armistice have pretended that, since the battle was lost in France, it was impossible to carry on the war in North Africa. To buttress this thesis, they lean on the situation as of June 25 when the armistice was enforced. But it was fifteen days earlier, on June 10, that General Weygand witnessed the crumbling of the Somme and Aisne fronts, at a time when it was yet possible to organize and carry out massive troop and matériel trans-

ports to England and North Africa. We would thus have found in our overseas possessions compact forces that would have kept up the struggle alongside the Allies and whose intervention would without doubt have helped to shorten the hostilities and hasten the liberation of France's own soil.

In 1870, after the abdication of Napoleon III, a Marshal of France withdrew under the walls of Metz with his army nearly intact, hoping that the invader would call upon him to discuss peace conditions and that he could thus choke off the growing Republic. This Marshal, who sacrificed the country's interest to his political preferences, was named Bazaine. In 1873, he was judged by a military tribunal and condemned for treason. History has scorned his name.

General Weygand's behavior after the armistice showed that, like Marshal Pétain, he cherished grand illusions on the possibility of preserving the independence of the Government despite the occupation of two-thirds of the territory. He also hoped to rebuild through the National Revolution a morally powerful France worthy of her past and able once more to attain her greatness. By this type of reasoning—and this is the first point on which he disagreed with the Bordeaux politicians—Weygand considered that there remained, despite defeat, a noble work to be done by the army. His Order of the Day for June 26, 1940, shows this clearly. To the soldiers who laid down their arms he addressed this appeal: "Wherever you may be, your mission is not ended. Purest expression of the country, you remain its backbone. Its moral and material resurgence is your future task."

In these words can be recognized one of the permanent themes of what might be termed the *mystique* of the French Army. The role of the soldier in the community is not only to protect its frontiers, it is also to maintain, through his example, the tradition of honor, a spirit of self-sacrifice, and devotion to the commonweal. Upon the career officer, according to Weygand, devolved the duty of assuring that these moral

qualities should continue to be venerated. The influence of the army in the country was thus not to be measured solely by its fire power. That influence was to be first and foremost of a spiritual order.

Such are the thoughts which prompted General Weygand in the decisions he had to make in July, 1940, as Minister for National Defense in the first Vichy Government. The armistice conventions had ordered the demobilization and immediate disarming of the troops with the exception of the formations necessary "to maintain internal order" and "safeguard French interests in the colonial Empire." France would thus, until some new development took place, be able to maintain in the Metropolitan area and overseas only a tiny army deprived of modern weapons. All General Weygand's efforts centered upon reinforcing the moral cohesion of these weak units, while keeping at their head and in all intermediate hierarchical positions the officers most worthy of command.

Moreover, within the Government, he from the very first day opposed the policy advocated by Pierre Laval. France, according to Weygand, should adhere strictly to the armistice conventions, conforming to them loyally but also requesting from the victor an equal respect for the engagements contracted. Any new concession was to be refused. All violation of the armistice terms by the occupying authorities was to be promptly protested.

It is strange that a man knowing Germany so well should have allowed himself to believe that Hitler would long tolerate such an attitude by men who, in accepting capitulation, had placed themselves without reservation in his hands. This can be explained only by the illusions which certain agents of the fifth column carefully planted in the social "set" to which the French High Command belonged. This entourage liked to believe that Hitlerism was only a front without substance, that the real power since the beginning of the war lay with the Wehrmacht, that the National Socialist regime—and perhaps

even Hitler himself—would sooner or later be overthrown in Germany so that French generals might then reach an understanding with German generals “among soldiers”—as Marshal Pétain had said in Bordeaux—on the basis of respect for the spoken word.

On the other hand, General Weygand, who all his life despised parliamentary institutions, made no effort, even in the Council of Ministers, to hide his deep personal dislike for Pierre Laval, whom he felt to be most representative of all the blemishes and the corruption of the fallen regime. Weygand's role as head of the army, his opposition to any new concession to Germany's advantage, his open hostility toward Laval, together explain clearly enough why an ultimatum of the occupation authorities obliged Marshal Pétain at the beginning of September, 1940, to overhaul his government and exclude General Weygand.

There was upon this occasion a stormy debate at the Hôtel du Parc. The former Generalissimo retired from the conference room, declaring to the Vice President of the Council: “We have not the same conception of France's honor, nor of her future.”

Marshal Pétain had Weygand recalled the same day, asking him to leave for Algiers as Delegate General of the Government in French Africa with far-reaching powers “to insure the security” of French overseas territories and especially to prevent any attempt at dissidence on their part. The Empire, in fact, was threatening to shake off Vichy's yoke. Chad, first of all, had rallied to General de Gaulle August 26, followed on August 27 by the Cameroons and on the 28th by all the other colonies of French Equatorial Africa. The South Seas Settlements in turn proclaimed their allegiance to Free France September 2; and the news coming from Dakar, Madagascar, the West Indies, and even from North Africa, Syria, and Indo-China, indicated that a spreading of the revolt was to be feared. The whole armistice policy looking toward neutralization of

the French lands beyond Europe thus seemed to be tottering. It was imperative that a man be placed at the head of the Empire who had enough prestige to command the loyalty of his subordinates and keep them in hand. The Germans, who had wanted no part of Weygand as Chief of the Army in Vichy, did not, of course, find it at all inconvenient that he should take upon himself, in their interest, the job of preventing French colonies from reentering the war at the side of Great Britain.

To these proposals Weygand answered: "If it's compensation you wish to offer me, I do not need it. I should be perfectly satisfied away from the limelight. But, if you want a trustworthy lieutenant in Africa, I am always ready to serve."

After an airplane crash which kept him in the hospital for several weeks, Weygand was not able to reach Algiers and his new post until the beginning of October—that is to say shortly after the Dakar affair.

The failure of the operation improvised against this base by Free French and British forces in order to snatch it away from German control had not modified to any great extent the state of mind of the French and native populations of North Africa.

Just as on the day after the armistice, the vast majority of French officers, functionaries, farmers, and traders continued to hope for a German defeat. The summer had gone by without the German armies being able to invade England and without the air bombardments bending the morale of the British people. Since the war was being prolonged, the hypothesis of a British victory became plausible once again. With these wishes and these hopes, there was perhaps mixed some diffidence and even some resentment toward former allies which Vichy propaganda accused each day by press and radio of having abandoned us in the midst of battle and of having directed their guns against us later on at Mers-el-Kébir and Dakar, to rob France of her Empire. But even those who spread these grievances appeared disposed to forget them if only Germany were beaten.

Among the natives, the main preoccupations were of a more utilitarian nature. Since the first days of July, North Africa, like Metropolitan France, was gripped in the British blockade. It was known that Germany was not in a position to furnish necessary imports such as tea, sugar, and cotton goods. The lack of fuel might, on the other hand, paralyze in the shortest time the economic life of a country in which very nearly all transport is by road. What would the fellahs do with their harvests if tradesmen no longer had the trucks to come and gather them on the local markets? So it was hoped it would soon be possible to reopen commercial relations with lands overseas, and it was well known that, to achieve this, an agreement with the British had to be reached.

General Weygand, whose principal mission was to prevent dissidence, took these various elements into account with great ability.

Shortly after his arrival, the Delegate General of the Government traveled in person through the principal cities of Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia. Everywhere his appearance was an occasion for military ceremonies, without any undue brilliance—which would have been out of place—but impressive enough so that the average man—French or Moslem—would grasp the idea that there remained in North Africa troops capable of making war. In the presence of the local authorities, General Weygand received, individually or in groups, all notables who requested an audience. In these conversations—as during conferences restricted to reserve officers—he explained the military factors behind the armistice without wearying. He avoided all words reflecting upon the English. He even referred to them as “our allies of yesterday and perhaps of tomorrow.” He gave people to understand that the war was not over, that many hopes remained, and that, after all, the French Army would perhaps still have a word to say before the end of the conflict. He declared his resolve to protect North Africa energetically against any German inter-

ference; but, at the same time, he expressed with the greatest vehemence his opposition to "the Gaullist dissidence," which he accused of playing into the hands of the enemy by weakening the forces the country would need when the decisive hour should strike. It must be acknowledged that that approach produced the effect counted upon by Vichy. Numerous officers and functionaries, staunch partisans of resistance to Germany, were convinced by General Weygand that it was really not worth while to risk life and liberty by seeking to join General de Gaulle or by fostering a local seditious movement since there would come a day when North Africa would enter the war with all its strength and behind its hierarchical chiefs.

At the same time, moreover, General Weygand had given to the authorities of the territories confided to his care very rigid instructions—whose application he watched over with great care—for repressing with the utmost severity all activities of Free French partisans. Numerous functionaries suspected of hostility to the National Revolution were shifted or cashiered. To some extent, everywhere and among all classes arrests were carried out and followed either by sentences from military tribunals or by internments in the Hitler way through mere administrative decision, in concentration camps set up along the Sahara border in a punishing climate. Methodical persecution finally ended in completely discouraging individual initiative.

Such repressive measures, however, would have been useless if General Weygand had not appeared in the public eye as the champion of North Africa's integrity against Germany's designs. At every opportunity he affirmed his determination to use arms against any attack. On February 2, 1941, he personally used Radio Algiers to deny that the Bizerte naval base had been put at the Reich's disposal. On March 9 in Vichy, he inspired the official communiqué saying that the Empire would be defended against all aggression "by the French forces alone." This was generally interpreted as excluding the use of military

assistance from the Axis powers to resist an English landing. In June, at the time of the Syrian affair, it was known that he intervened to localize that new conflict. And still better—with this love for parallel action which characterizes the efficient police force—the repressive measures ordered by Weygand against the De Gaullists were often accompanied by somewhat similar action in extreme Doriotist circles, notably in Oran and in Casablanca.

But behind this façade of resistance, German infiltration in North Africa was methodically going forward. In January, contrary to armistice terms which confided control of North Africa to Italian commissions, Foreign Minister Flandin agreed that a German armistice commission be set up in Casablanca. In March, the permanent staff of that body comprised sixty-two officers, petty officers, and soldiers. They numbered two hundred in April, in addition to military agents or civilians on a so-called temporary mission. A little later, Reich consulates opened in the principal towns—even in Morocco where Germany had not been represented since 1914.

The personal prestige of General Weygand did not, however, suffer from this as much as might have been expected since he made it clear that all these measures had been taken without consulting him and that, as soon as he was informed, he had protested against their enforcement. And this was true. In order to understand it, one must know that, despite his title of Delegate General for the French Government in French Africa, Weygand did not actually exercise, beyond command of the troops, much more than powers of control and coordination. This did not modify in the least the customary procedures of the administrative hierarchy. The Resident Generals in Morocco and Tunisia—both areas under protectorate—continued to be under the direct authority of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Governor General of Algiers, which was territory assimilated into Metropolitan France, received his instructions from the Minister of the Interior. The

High Commissioner in West Africa was under the Minister of Colonies. So the method was very simple: where measures were favorable to Germany—especially in the field of economic collaboration—it was enough for the qualified Vichy Department to address its orders directly to the chief of the territory concerned. Since in this way General Weygand would be informed only of *faits accomplis*, he had plenty of latitude to plead that he disapproved. This interpretation may have allowed him to keep his administrative soul at rest; but his conscience was another matter.

The German military commission at Casablanca was composed for the most part of officers speaking Arabic and specializing in the study of Moslem affairs. These men moved about the country ceaselessly and devoted themselves to intense propaganda among the native notables.

It became clear that the best way to offset such propaganda was to remedy the existing economic difficulties. Such is the background of the agreements which permitted importation through the blockade to North Africa of certain limited quantities of merchandise from America. It was natural for public opinion to attribute a political significance to these accords because of the rising hopes, from that time on, of intervention by the United States in the war. Moreover, among their favorable results was the strengthening of the staffs of the American consulates with young agents assigned to control on the spot the use of the products imported. Their presence could make up, to some extent, for the propaganda action of the German officers.

As I was entrusted with the first negotiations for the supplying of North Africa, I will say first of all, to give a clearer picture of General Weygand's attitude, that he always behaved as if he did not know that an agreement would have been impossible unless preceded by direct conversations with representatives of the British Ministry of Economic Warfare.

These conversations had been held in Madrid early in No-

vember, 1940, on my own initiative. They ended in less than a week in an arrangement (and not, as was written recently, in a mere proposal) put into effect without delay which allowed Morocco to obtain from Spain and Portugal the goods it needed most urgently.

It had been foreseen from the beginning that similar dispositions could, subject to certain provisions, be adopted for all North Africa and be extended not only to imports coming from the Iberian Peninsula, but also to purchases to be made in other neutral countries, especially in the United States.

This last possibility was considered upon several occasions, notably at Rabat in August between the Secretary General of the Protectorate and the United States Minister in Tangier. It was also discussed in Washington from November on between high officials of the State Department and a representative of private Moroccan interests who was acting in a semiofficial capacity. Finally, it was broached in Algiers late in December and early in January between General Weygand and Robert D. Murphy, Counselor of the United States Embassy in Vichy.

New Franco-British conversations were opened in Lisbon and Tangier during January. These conversations continued for several weeks with the intermittent participation of Murphy and with no other interruption except a short trip I had to make to Vichy in the earlier part of February to get approval in principle of the projects discussed and solve rather serious difficulties stirred up by the activities of the German armistice commission. On February 24, I was back in Rabat with Murphy. In the evening, during an interview in which the Secretary General of the Protectorate played a decisive role, we put into writing a one-page memorandum defining the principal points on which an agreement seemed possible to us.

In the margin of this document General Weygand and Counselor Murphy set their initials in Algiers the following day. We then left for Vichy, where the definite agreement was

concluded in the form of letters exchanged on March 9 and 10 between Admiral Leahy and Admiral Darlan.

However, all matters pertaining to application of these agreements remained to be settled. It was necessary, in particular, to establish a list of merchandise that could be imported into North Africa. The unfreezing of the necessary funds, the movement of the French vessels to handle the shipments, the operation of the control to be exercised on the spot by American agents, raised many complex problems. These problems required searching talks which took place in Washington from the middle of April to the end of June.

The story of these successive negotiations has been sketched in a recent work, but this is the first time that they are aired in their various stages. Thus, contrary to a very widespread conception, there exists no written document which can be properly described as the Weygand-Murphy agreement. The Delegate General for French Africa always refused, effectively, to make any personal commitments without first being formally authorized to do so by Marshal Pétain. On many occasions, General Weygand stressed in my presence that he would in no case overstep Vichy's instructions, and that he was not to be relied upon to initiate anything which might resemble dissidence in any way. "It is not at my age," he declared, "that one becomes a rebel." In the light of this statement, it is hard to understand the illusions about him to which part of the American press has clung for so long.

These illusions—and the numerous articles they inspired—have had but one concrete result, being used as a pretext for campaigns against Weygand in Paris newspapers paid by the Reich. Because of his opposition to German schemes on one hand and his good relations with the United States on the other, it was inevitable that General Weygand would soon appear to partisans of the New Order as an enemy to be done away with. He had, of course, rendered Germany a service of the first order: maintaining French Africa under Pétain's rule

and preventing it from rallying to General de Gaulle. But this service was, in some ways, a purely negative contribution, while Hitler was awaiting positive advantages from the control exercised by his Vichy vassals over France's overseas possessions. These possessions must, to his mind, furnish the Axis powers with food and raw materials in ever increasing quantities. It was especially necessary that North Africa cooperate—indirectly, perhaps, but efficiently, to sustain the military effort of the Italians and Germans in territories close to Tripoli and Libya. Weygand, who was opposed to this scheme, was thus an impediment both for Hitler and for the men who in Vichy or Paris strove to curry Hitler's favor.

During the winter of 1940–1941, Weygand enjoyed relative quiet in Algiers. It was the period between Laval's dismissal and the formation of the Darlan Cabinet when Vichy was working toward a difficult equilibrium. But difficulties were to start in March at the first sign that the Commander in Chief of the Fleet favored collaboration with Germany. They increased from month to month. In order to remain in office—and, especially, to be in a position to prevent or at any rate to delay what he felt to be more disastrous—Weygand had to make concessions. A trace of these concessions can be found in his public remarks, especially in a speech to the Fez Legionnaires on June 23 when, criticizing England for the first time, he said in carefully weighed words: "Our duty cannot be at the side of an ally who has become an opponent, and whose fallacious promises lure, under noble pretenses, too many of our men." On August 31, he was moved in another speech to support without reticence the thesis propounded in a recent message by Marshal Pétain on the necessity for loyal collaboration with Germany.

But the invader wanted something more substantial than words. In July, General Weygand, while remaining Delegate General in Africa, was named Governor General of Algeria which appeared to some to be a strengthening of his authority.

But in these new functions he was in fact subordinated to Admiral Darlan, whereas up to then he had taken his authority directly from Marshal Pétain. Other measures, which were imposed upon him without publicity during the summer, tended to weaken and disorganize the military resistance. North Africa would have been in a position to oppose to German aggression. Numerous officers known for their patriotism were recalled to France; and among those who replaced them some were drawn from Syria where they had fought against the British, and some had been recently liberated from German prison camps after writing a formal pledge never to bear arms against the Reich. The bulk of the troops and available matériel were concentrated along the Atlantic coast of Morocco to protect it in the event of an Allied landing. On the other hand, Tunisia, exposed to German or Italian attack, was kept practically defenseless. So, little by little, there crumbled all that could have contributed to build a powerful North Africa.

Of all the hopes which had sprung up around Weygand's name there came to be only the name with nothing behind it. Almost every month, the Delegate General in Africa was summoned to Vichy. Upon each of these trips, correspondents of the foreign press in Switzerland announced he would not return to his post, and what had so often been predicted finally took place.

As always, Vichy started by issuing denials. According to an Havas dispatch of November 17, "authorized circles" attached no credence to the rumors spread abroad regarding the "ousting" of General Weygand at some near date. The same dispatch asserted that the "main reason" for Weygand's visit to Vichy was "the discussion of African economic problems," and that he would return to Algiers "in two or three days." But two days later the rumors denied with such insistence were confirmed. It was officially announced that General Weygand "was retiring," and that the post of Delegate General for the Government in French Africa was abolished. The Vichy explana-

tions placed before the French public pretended that it was only a matter of an administrative reorganization: Weygand had been entrusted the preceding year with a mission of an exceptional character whose prolongation was no longer justified since its object, to strengthen French authority in Africa, had been attained.

At the same time, the most qualified spokesmen of the Government circulated for the use of the United States another version, according to which Marshal Pétain had been obliged, against his will, to ask General Weygand's resignation, Germany having forced it upon him by a formal ultimatum, under the threat of immediate occupation of the Free Zone and North Africa.

Today I can disclose what really took place in Vichy during November, 1941. I have had the occasion, in fact, to gather recently versions whose authenticity cannot be doubted. I cannot, of course, give the names of my informants without exposing them or their families to reprisals, but I can guarantee the absolute authenticity of the account given to me on the strength of conversations in Grasse in December, 1941, between General Weygand and various persons whose intellectual and moral honesty is above the slightest question.

For three months, Marshal Pétain had exercised the greatest pressure on General Weygand to agree to resign of his own free will. It was for this reason alone that the Delegate General in North Africa was called so often to Vichy.

In August, the Marshal told Weygand: "There is a German ultimatum. The demarcation line will be crossed, the territory will be invaded if you do not relieve yourself of your duties. I ask you to understand, to make the *beau geste*."

Weygand answered: "You have entrusted me with a mission which I have fulfilled. The French and native populations of Africa have confided themselves in me. I would betray their confidence by abandoning them. I cannot submit to such an ending for my career. Moreover, it is easy to tell the Germans:

'For fifty-six years Weygand has always served in a straightforward and loyal fashion. We know him well. He is neither a rebel nor an adventurer. He will stay where he is.' If you make that answer, I can guarantee that the Germans will never make a move. So, I will not voluntarily hand in my resignation. If you want to recall me, do it. The decision is up to you."

The conversation stopped there, and Weygand left for Algiers the same week. Some time earlier, the former Commander in Chief had met the collaborationist Scapini, who exasperated him to such an extent with his pro-German ideas that Weygand finally yelled at him that he wished passionately for an English victory.

In October, Weygand once more left for Vichy, this time at Admiral Darlan's request. But the Marshal received him first, to ask him, as in August, for his resignation. "The ultimatum doesn't seem very urgent," Weygand retorted, "since you've done nothing yet."

Pétain then placed before him a note of Otto Abetz which said approximately this: "I have always defended General Weygand before the Führer and the General Staff of the Wehrmacht. General Weygand, a great military expert, cannot doubt a crushing German victory. Thus, he must know it is useless and maladroit to intrigue against us. But his recent declarations to an important French personality are a confirmation for us that he does not like Germany. Under such conditions I can no longer take his part, and I regret it." After reading the document, Weygand told Pétain: "It is true. I don't like Germany, and I cannot hide it. On top of that, it does not anger me in the slightest to lose M. Abetz as a defender before Hitler. Now, if you consider this paper as an ultimatum, it is your business. It is up to you to decide."

The Marshal then proposed that Weygand enter the Government as Minister for the Empire or even, if he preferred, stay in Algiers—on the condition that he renounce his military command. Weygand refused both suggestions.

The former Commander in Chief waited several days in Vichy to see Admiral Darlan who had summoned him. Upon each of Weygand's requests for an interview, the Admiral's staff answered that Darlan was busy. Tired of waiting, Weygand sent one of his ordnance officers to the Admiral's Cabinet to announce that he was going to leave for Algiers the following Monday. To this one of the collaborators of Darlan answered: "Yes, if, before then, some one doesn't—" The unfinished phrase was completed with a "couic" and the gesture of wringing a chicken's neck.

Shocked by this rudeness, Weygand immediately went to call on the Marshal, to whom he said: "Up to now I have not been accustomed to living in a country of gangsters. But, if that is the way things are going on in Vichy, I will draw my own pistol." Pétain, furious with Darlan, immediately left to call on the Vice President of the Council who was on the floor below his own. He came back several minutes later to tell Weygand with a smile that the misunderstanding had been cleared up and that the Admiral would receive him immediately.

This Weygand-Darlan conversation was brief. Not the slightest allusion was made to the reasons for which the Vice President of the Council had summoned the Delegate General of the Government in Africa to Vichy. The Admiral asked the General for news of Madame Weygand. The General answered by asking the Admiral for news of Madame Darlan. And this was all. Once more Weygand left for Algiers as he had left for Vichy—a somewhat sadder if a wiser man.

These crises, constantly repeated, merely filled him with discouragement and disgust. What was the use of obstinately opposing a force which would soon or late finish stronger. Foch's former collaborator, who has retained, at seventy-five, all the suppleness and spring of the horseman, could not face going into retirement without sadness while he still felt himself able to serve his country. In order to understand his inner

feelings, one must know that Weygand's origins are a closely guarded secret. Born in Belgium, he is said to be the offspring of a personage of royal blood, perhaps even of imperial blood. In his adolescence, he selected France as his country upon entering St. Cyr. To go into retirement—especially to do so without prestige, after the defeat, after the failure of his mission in Algiers, under the pressure of a handful of men he despised, was for him in a way the forced rupture of bonds which attached him to his only real family—the army. This, perhaps, also explains why he himself has never wanted to break off these ties by rebelling against his hierarchical chief, Marshal Pétain.

In November, Weygand had to leave once more for Vichy upon an urgent request. As soon as he arrived, the Marshal told him: "The situation is more and more serious. We can't delay any longer. The insistence of the Germans is terrific. Resign and become a Minister." Weygand countered with the same arguments he used in August and October, adding that he wouldn't take part in the Government at any price because he did not want to become the colleague of men who were traitors to Marshal Pétain and to France.

For two or three days, the Chief of State sent numerous emissaries who tried in vain to convince Weygand. Lucien Romier, in particular, came in to tell him the Germans would be satisfied if he renounced his military command. Finally, Weygand was called before Pétain, in the presence of four ministers, to confront the so-called "ultimatum." This time it was no longer a note from Abetz; it was merely a personal letter addressed to Jacques Benoist-Mechin by General von Stülpnagel, the man who directed the execution of hostages. "The assassin of Paris," as Weygand called him in relating the scene, used the following terms: "Every one knows that Weygand does not like the Germans. So why do you still leave him in office? When we take Moscow and the New Order is set up in Europe, France must not be surprised if we treat her as a foe."

When Weygand had finished reading and glanced up, the Marshal and his four ministers looked at him without a word. "It was they," reported Weygand, "who looked like the accused and I like the judge." Finally the Marshal asked: "What do you think of this?" "You have two solutions," Weygand answered. "The first is to say: 'He has served France for fifty-six years, and he will stay where he belongs.' The second solution is to obey." And, as no one said anything, Weygand concluded after a long period of silence: "Now I understand. The matter is closed. Have your own way." Then he made several recommendations as to Africa: "After my resignation, don't turn things upside down. That would be dangerous. Leave in office the men already there; I vouch for them." The Marshal answered: "I consider this a testament, and I'll see that it is carried out." The meeting then broke up.

Weygand intended to retire to Blidah, a little Algerian town, to close his life under the African sun; but Pétain refused him this modest consolation that evening, telling him his return to Algeria as a private citizen would be wrongly interpreted by the Germans and it was preferable that he never set foot again in Algiers, even to pack his belongings. So Weygand retired to the Riviera with two officers whom the regime did not dare leave in service in Africa—one of them his son Jacques, leader of a squadron of Spahis.

Of the actors in this drama, who was most despicable? On the one hand, there were Admiral Darlan and the Vichy collaborationists, always scampering to meet the victor's whim, impatient to be rid of a man whose mere presence in Africa impeded their scheming. To them Weygand sneered full in the midst of a Council of Ministers session: "You wallow in defeat like a dog in dung."

And, on the other hand, there was a discouraged old man, borne down by the weight of his own error, surrounded by men he knew were betraying him, incapable of defending to the end the only high dignitary of his regime who had

shown himself completely loyal toward him. Confronting Darlan and Pétain was the heir of Foch's glory, the General who had personified the greatest military hope of France between the two wars. He had retained enough pride to slash his opponents in the face with words; but his conscience remained nevertheless so easy, whatever he might say in the general debasement of capitulation, that the only argument of which he made use in his defense was that the Germans had nothing to fear from him since he had always been a resigned, disciplined, and obedient servant. "Discipline," all young French recruits have been taught in the camps for generations, "is the foundation of an army's power." But no one has ever pretended that an army exists only to be taught discipline. Discipline is merely a means to be devoted to the noblest of causes, the country's salvation. With a fallacious concept of discipline Weygand, who believed himself to be indispensable to the defense of French Africa, betrayed his duty by lending himself to the comedy of a freely granted resignation.

Nothing now can change the opinion of Frenchmen on Weygand. In this war, we fight for something infinitely more precious than territorial independence or liberty itself; we fight for France's honor. Weygand abandoned us twice—in June, 1940, at the armistice, and in November, 1941, by deserting North Africa's defense.

France demands leaders who have not failed her.

XI

Vichy and Washington

Nothing surpasses my love for the United States except my hatred for Germany. —JEAN JULES JUSSERAND

Franco-American relations are unique in the international set-up because their evolution has been determined much more by sentiment than by political or economic reasons. This, in a world devoted to self-interest, is something rather exceptional by any standard.

This does not mean, however, that the relationship has always been as warm as one might wish. In 1929, the sentiments expressed for France in the United States suggested to André Siegfried several observations which have not apparently been weakened by events of the past two years. "No country," he wrote, "is loved with greater passion in the United States than France; but, on the other hand, no country is more underrated and more severely judged. It appears that there is always an excess either one way or the other and that, alternately, there dominates either illusion or deception."

Despite these variations, there nevertheless remains but one reality, even though it may be temporarily submerged by a wave of dissension and misunderstanding. From Lafayette to Pershing, we have great memories in common. And, whatever may be the acts and words of statesmen, we share above all the same ideal of liberty. It matters little that the political institutions are very dissimilar or that our parliamentary Republic differed widely from the American presidential regime. What counts is the attachment of the two nations to a type of social organization which guarantees to every citizen the right to speak and write as he thinks, this freedom being the foundation for all others. We are convinced that we shall always agree

on this point, and this conviction is the basis of our friendship.

Thus, after the defeat, it was natural that the French nation turned toward the American nation, for it was prompted by a surge of hope, by the assurance that the most powerful of the democracies would sooner or later enter a war in which the survival of free peoples was at stake.

As for the men of Vichy, they certainly believed in June, 1940, that America was too far away to help France continue the war; but the attitude the United States Government would assume toward them was none the less one of their main concerns.

Marshal Pétain, who strove to rally the masses to the National Revolution, knew well that if he broke with Washington as he had broken with London, his regime would soon assume in the eyes of the French its true form—that of a mere instrument of the enemy. He wanted to maintain this open door so that what was called “the Free Zone” might escape being turned into a prison.

On the other hand, the levies methodically extorted by the invader were the forerunning signs of famine. It was necessary for France to relax the grip of the British blockade by soliciting America’s aid. The United States alone was in a position to obtain from Great Britain the passage of boats loaded with foodstuffs for French ports. The purchase of food supplies could no longer be carried out in practice except by making use of the funds deposited in American banks. The food reserves of the New World also appeared to be the only ones sufficient to meet all the European shortages.

The Vichy Chief of State was not unaware, at that time, that by safeguarding for France the material aid America alone could give her he would be in a position to thwart at least some of Germany’s plans and also hold fast to the minimum of independence he needed to keep himself in power.

In order to understand clearly what took place in Vichy following the summer of 1940, it is therefore necessary to review

at least briefly the principal phases of Franco-American relations during these two years.

Three weeks before the armistice, United States Ambassador William C. Bullitt, judging defeat inevitable, undertook what has been correctly called a "salvage operation." He wanted to prevent the conquest of France from precipitating into German hands arms and resources which could still be put into a safe place before they could be turned into a menace against the United States.

This applied in the first place to the French war fleet which, once added to the German and Italian navies, would have tipped the scale of sea power in favor of the Axis. Bullitt obtained verbal but categorical assurances from President Albert Lebrun and Prime Minister Paul Reynaud. With great caution, he also addressed himself to their eventual successors: Edouard Daladier, Marshal Pétain, and Admiral Darlan. According to Forrest Davis and Ernest K. Lindley in "How War Came," Pétain is said to have answered that France without her navy would be nothing but a "eunuch." And Darlan is reported to have declared: "I would rather scuttle my ships than deliver them to the Germans." The offer of a refuge for the French fleet in American ports, was, however, dismissed. But the last Paul Reynaud Cabinet agreed to transfer to the other side of the Atlantic a considerable portion of the gold of the Banque de France. It was carried aboard United States and French warships. The latter landed their cargo of gold in Martinique after the armistice.

During the weeks that followed the installation of Marshal Pétain and his ministers in Vichy, America's policy toward the new French regime was marked by hesitation. If no official break—not even a suspension—in diplomatic relations occurred, a *de facto* situation very similar to a break soon developed. Ambassador William C. Bullitt returned to the United States in July, 1940, after obtaining from Pétain, Weygand, and Darlan a reiteration of their promises on the fleet.

His Counselor, Robert D. Murphy, also departed from France. The First Secretary, Maynard Barnes, stayed at the Paris Embassy, while there remained attached to the government at Vichy only a young diplomat of great capacity, H. Freeman Matthews. However, as early as the end of July, the Washington Government made a gesture which implied recognition of the legitimate character of the Vichy Government by accepting as new French Ambassador Gaston Henry-Haye, Senator and Mayor of Versailles.

For three more months the decision remained in suspense. But the problem which arose was not to find out if there would or would not be a break in diplomatic relations for doctrinal or sentimental reasons. It was to determine the best practical ways of withdrawing from Germany's reach "this bloc of sea power and territories" (as Adolf A. Berle, Jr., described it) which Vichy still held. In the autumn, satisfactory conversations had taken place at Martinique between Admiral Georges Robert, High Commissioner for the French Antilles, and Admiral John W. Greenslade. Thus it remained possible, despite the Reich's victory, to obtain from the French authorities the local guarantees adjudged necessary for security of the Western Hemisphere.

In November, after the election which returned him to office for a third term, President Roosevelt decided that the time had come to name a successor to Mr. Bullitt. He first called upon General Pershing, who had continued to entertain friendly relations with Marshal Pétain but was unable to comply on account of the state of his health. So the President designated, in place of the former Commander in Chief of the American Expeditionary Force of World War I, a man he had entrusted for a long time with the greatest personal confidence, Admiral William D. Leahy, Governor of Puerto Rico. It was impossible for him to indicate more definitely the importance he attached to a delicate mission.

The circumstances, it must be said, appeared propitious for

the experiment about to be attempted. During the previous summer, Marshal Pétain had made known upon several instances his friendship for America. He had proclaimed on August 23 that France would always remain "attached to the ideal which she jointly shares with the great American democracies and which is based on respect for the human person, devotion to the family, the city, and the nation, and a love for justice and humanity." The Franco-German collaboration policy outlined at Montoire in late October had not yet been followed up by anything concrete. The sending of General Weygand to North Africa revealed, moreover, a definite desire to defend the Empire. On top of that, all these favorable elements were strengthened in December by Laval's dismissal.

"I simply am going to France to represent the Government of the United States, and that's all there is to it." This was, according to the *New York Times*, Admiral Leahy's only comment, as he went aboard the cruiser *Tuscaloosa* in New York on December 26. The Vichy newspapers published a somewhat longer statement: "It is with great pride that I will collaborate with Marshal Pétain who is one of the noblest and greatest of contemporary figures. He means to safeguard France and put her back on her feet. May he allow me to support him as a modest workman in his magnificent undertaking."

What could be the American contribution toward the recovery of France? The problem was, of course, above all to maintain the hopes of the French people by being on the scene and also to establish between the Chief of the French State and the personal envoy of President Roosevelt relations sealed by mutual esteem and confidence so that, taking into consideration the material aid he could receive from the United States, Marshal Pétain would feel encouraged to refuse to cede to Germany two elements of military power—the fleet and the colonial bases—which had not been handed to her by the armistice conventions.

It is remarkable that, from the very start, America's political

action addressed itself at the same time to the French people in general and to Marshal Pétain personally—while affecting to ignore the Vichy Government as such.

Marshal Pétain's requests for food never failed to get a very sympathetic reception in the United States, both from the Government and from public opinion. The French people will not soon forget the generous measures taken on their behalf by so many influential Americans and American associations in those tragic months. The practical results of their actions, however, were limited to fourteen thousand tons of flour and two American Red Cross mercy ships loaded with medicines, vitamins, evaporated milk, and children's layettes. In addition, various gifts of medicine and milk made by the American Friends Service Committee were distributed by their representatives in the Free Zone. This assistance was all—or nearly all—received by the Free Zone from the United States.

Marshal Pétain, however, declared at Grenoble March 19: "We rely to a great extent on America's aid to solve our supply problem." Why was this aid not more generalized and more efficient? During March, the difficulties attendant upon this problem made their appearance.

Nobody doubted that Germany would strive to squeeze the utmost from her conquest. But there was still some hope that the Vichy Government would retain, for the benefit of the French people, the management of Free Zone and Empire resources. Such hope was to disregard Germany's unlimited greed. Further, it overlooked the fact that, in normal times, that part of France called "the Free Zone" was not self-sufficient and depended largely upon supplies from the now occupied territory, an area which includes some of the richest agricultural regions of France.

Thus, American food for the Free Zone would have taken the place of harvest surpluses of the Occupied Zone which Germany intended to keep for herself. By tolerating such a

thing, Great Britain, then fighting alone, would have practically renounced the use of her most effective weapon, the blockade, and the Washington Government was not inclined—in fact was strongly disinclined—to exert pressure in this direction.

The Vichy authorities had nevertheless offered several schemes for making sure that imported food supplies were effectively used in the Free Zone and not sent over into the Occupied Zone. But this guarantee covered only part of the problem. The chief difficulty remained: how to assure that, once supplied with American food, the Free Zone would succeed in keeping the same balance of trade with the Occupied Zone as before the war, that is to say, delivering no more and receiving no less. This was what had to be proved.

But a proof to the contrary was publicly given March 24 by the conclusion of an agreement between the Vichy Government and the occupation authorities regulating trade between the two zones. This agreement levied upon the Free Zone, especially in the matter of livestock, a toll far greater than the normal exchange average and guaranteed it in return only a part of the cereals, potatoes, and sugar it usually received from the Occupied Zone. The second chapter of this agreement was to reveal that the deliveries promised by the Germans were never to attain the promised amounts.

Distribution by the American Red Cross of the fourteen thousand tons of flour imported into the Free Zone from the United States was to create serious difficulties. This flour was a gift of the American Government to the French people, and its purchase had been made from a special \$50,000,000 appropriation by Congress in the fall of 1939 for the sending of food to the stricken populations of Europe. Upon instructions from Washington, Admiral Leahy asked that bread made with this flour be distributed free of charge and over and above the ordinary rations. After endless discussion, Vichy agreed that the distribution be made free of charge—but against the usual

number of ration-card tickets. The final result was that, despite the importation of the American flour, the total quantity allocated to the Free Zone consumer was not increased by a single gram.

After this experiment, it was clear that any new cargo of cereals could, in the last analysis, be of benefit only to the invader.

Despite these disagreeable findings, the experiment might have been continued on account of the gratitude toward the United States that had been displayed nearly everywhere in the Free Zone during the first distributions of "American bread"; but other difficulties of a still more serious nature blocked the way.

American supplies for the Free Zone could not be shipped under the American flag because the Neutrality Act, which was still in force at that time, forbade United States vessels to enter a port in the war zone. (The exception made for the carrying of medical supplies and other products by the American Red Cross on the *Cold Harbor* and the *Exmouth* could not legally be extended to commercial cargoes.) Nor was it possible to utilize neutral ships, since these were engaged for the most part in the transportation of foodstuffs and arms to Great Britain. The supplies for the Free Zone could thus be carried only under the French flag.

Now, the armistice convention placed under German control the entire French merchant fleet. Although a great number of these ships were idle in Mediterranean ports, the Wiesbaden Commission formally opposed the use of any of them to carry the American supplies. Moreover, it requested the return of ships which had sought refuge in American harbors since June, 1940. The Washington Government finally agreed that the transportation of flour be carried out by two of these, the *Léopold L. D.* and the *Ile de Ré*, but with the understanding that, after their cargo was unloaded at Mar-

seilles, they return without delay to their American starting point.

Vichy hastened to grant the guarantee, but in a cautious formula the exact meaning of which was disclosed later. When the two ships arrived in Marseilles, the Wiesbaden Commission barred their return to the United States. Vichy announced itself unable to escape this veto unless assurance could be given that two other French vessels which had sought shelter in United States ports would be allowed to load cargoes for France or North Africa.

The *Léopold L. D.* and the *Ile de Ré* arrived in Marseilles May 1 and 6 and did not leave there until July 1 and 6—at the same time as the *Ile de Noirmoutier* and the *Ile d'Ouessant* weighed anchor, one from New York and the other from Baltimore, bound for Casablanca. These four ships were later on to continue an intermittent service between the United States and Morocco. The Wiesbaden regulations imposing simultaneous departures were maintained.

It is easy to discern the aim of the German demands. The supply traffic between American and Free Zone ports would have been exclusively by French boats harbored in America since the armistice. Once in Marseilles, a ship would be granted the right to return only if another were simultaneously leaving New York. Half the boats would thus be either permanently in a French port or making for a French port. When, for any reason, the United States might decide to cease sending food to France, Vichy would thus be in a position to retain half the tonnage employed.

The policy of mercy would thus boil down to a paradox by which Vichy could place under German control merchant tonnage out of Hitler's reach at the time of the capitulation. This, in practice, would increase the maritime potential the Axis powers might utilize when the decisive hour should strike in the Mediterranean.

Thus, the meddling of the German armistice commission

and Vichy's submissive attitude toward it caused the failure of America's policy of assistance to the people of the French unoccupied territory.

Admiral Leahy found himself deprived of one of the main arguments he had been instructed to use in order to encourage Marshal Pétain to resist German pressure. The Washington Government continued, however, to do all it could to prevent Vichy from making any new concessions which would lead to the transfer of the war fleet and the colonial bases to direct, or indirect German control. But one must keep in mind that if Vichy desired to keep its fleet and its bases out of German hands, it was not because of the attitude of the United States but to safeguard its own existence. If, later on, Marshal Pétain had yielded the fleet and bases to the Reich, he would have by this very act given up the only factors that made his own government possible. With the Germans once in Bizerte and Dakar, the men of Vichy would have had quickly to give way to the Paris collaborationists or even, as in Poland or in Belgium, to mere Gauleiters.

In June, 1940, Hitler made his own choice. He could have rejected the Bordeaux Government's plea for an armistice and proceeded without delay to the total occupation of Metropolitan France. In that case, the French fleet and overseas territories would have remained in the war. The only way to eliminate from the war all the forces still under French control was to deal with Marshal Pétain. From its inception, then, the Vichy regime was used to neutralize the fleet and colonies Hitler could not have subdued by force of arms.

Thus a great price was paid for something that did not require buying. The maintenance of diplomatic relations between Washington and Vichy contributed to Marshal Pétain's Government, especially in the period immediately following the armistice, an appearance of legality it needed in order to consolidate its authority and its prestige. Moreover, it was

this prestige alone that caused the fleet and the colonies to remain faithful to Vichy.

During May, 1941, the situation was extremely critical. After Admiral Darlan's talks with Nazi leaders and Hitler himself, Marshal Pétain on May 15 made a striking declaration in favor of Franco-German collaboration. The very same day, President Roosevelt warned the Vichy Government publicly against "a plan of voluntary alliance" which would deliver up to Germany "France and her colonial Empire, including the French African colonies and their Atlantic coasts, with the menace which that involves to the peace and safety of the Western Hemisphere." It is inconceivable, he added, that the French people "will willingly accept any agreement for so-called 'collaboration,' which will in reality imply their alliance with a military power whose central and fundamental policy calls for the utter destruction of liberty, freedom, and popular institutions everywhere."

It was learned, at the same time, that several air fields in Syria had been placed at the disposal of German air units on their way to Iraq. This was denied by Vichy, which pretended that the landings were merely isolated and accidental; but the archives of Beirut have since yielded their secret, and the Fighting French have two telegrams addressed in May by the War Ministry to General Dentz, High Commissioner for Syria.

The first telegram reads: "During his talks with the Führer, Admiral Darlan conceded to the Germans the use of Near Eastern aerial bases." The second reads: "In case German or Italian planes fly over the Near East, you must abstain from any attack. If some of these planes land on your airdromes, receive them and ask me for instructions. On the contrary, British planes must be attacked with all means." One can understand why Cordell Hull was in a position to say on May 17 that the explanations furnished by Vichy were mere "rhetoric," and that the facts "fully justified" the warning issued by President Roosevelt.

Other warnings, just as serious, were to follow one another till the end of the year. On June 5, confronted by disquieting news from the Near East, Secretary Hull passed severe judgment on the Vichy Government policy which aimed at making France and the Empire instruments "of aggression and oppression against other peoples." On June 13, five days after the opening of hostilities in Syria, the Secretary of State personally denounced the "Darlan-Laval group" which he accused of "seeking to deliver France politically, economically, and militarily to Hitler," and he reproached the Vichy Government for having ordered Near Eastern troops to resist the Allied occupation of Syria after having allowed German air forces to establish bases there. As Hull said, Vichy had consented to do "Germany's fighting in the Syrian area of the general German advance." This was "a matter of the deepest disappointment and sorrow" for American friends of France.

A little later, the Indo-China affair in turn provoked apprehensions in Washington. Sumner Welles publicly criticized the facilities granted by Vichy to Japan for the military occupation of Indo-China's main bases. He asserted that America's policy toward the Government led by Admiral Darlan would from then on depend upon the "manifest effectiveness" with which this Government would endeavor to protect French colonies.

These well weighed words on August 9 provoked an insolent answer from Fernand de Brinon. The man selected by Laval and maintained by Darlan as a link between the German authorities and Vichy was not afraid to tell the representatives of the American press in Paris that "France's conception of the world is founded on a national form of socialism which means a redistribution of the world's riches, as opposed to the British conception to which Mr. Roosevelt has adhered." And he added: "If Marshal Pétain is seeking an honorable understanding with Hitler, this has nothing to do with Messrs. Roosevelt and Sumner Welles."

The most serious crisis was to take place in the fall. On November 19, just as General Wavell started the offensive in Libya, it was learned in Washington that General Weygand had been obliged to hand in his resignation as Delegate General of the Government, Commander in Chief of the French forces in Africa, and Governor General of Algeria. The man who had been considered by the United States until then as the trustee of the French Empire disappeared from the scene under circumstances which forecast imminent and serious developments. The shadow of the German threat was spreading suddenly from Tunis to Dakar. Was the Reich going to win in several days, by Vichy's default, both the battle of the Mediterranean and—ininitely more dangerous for the American continent and the final outcome of the war—the battle of the South Atlantic?

On November 20, in a communiqué handed to the press, Cordell Hull expressed the fears of the United States Government by saying that Vichy had "acquiesced to the express demand of Hitler," and that Weygand's resignation cleared the way to "a German control over French authority entirely outside the provisions of the armistice." He added that "American policy toward France is being reviewed," and that "all plans for economic assistance to French North Africa are suspended." He concluded: "It remains to be seen to what further extent Hitler will attempt to take over by force or threat of force the sovereignty and control of the French Empire."

At the same time, semi-official commentaries featured that the resignation of General Weygand appeared to be the most disquieting concession Vichy had ever made to the Germans, and it was indicated that America's policy "would have to adjust itself to events" if it was demonstrated that, in North Africa, the acts of the Pétain-Darlan Government did not sufficiently take into consideration the interests of the United States.

We can stop at this event because it marks the conclusion

of what was, in my opinion, the most important phase in the development of Vichy-Washington relations since the armistice. After General Weygand's dismissal, these relations took on a new aspect which America's entrance into the war three weeks later was to accentuate. As long as General Weygand remained in Algiers, it had been felt in Washington that the French Empire would, if need be, break away from Vichy and resist German aggression. Now it could no longer be doubted that, if Vichy gave in, there would be none in Africa with the courage to stop Hitler on his way to Casablanca and Dakar. Thus, there remained, unless relations were broken, only the possibility of bringing all the elements of America's policy to bear upon Marshal Pétain personally despite his previous weakness and to encourage him, regardless of what might happen, in an attitude of resistance to German pressure.

XII

The Second Winter

I am a bird: see my wings. . . .

I am a mouse: long live the rats!

—LA FONTAINE

Eighteen months passed after the armistice, bringing the eve of the second winter. Peace, believed so near in June, 1940, appeared more distant than ever. Germany dominated Europe but had nowhere won a decisive victory. If Hitler's marshals had conquered immense territories in the East, they had not been able to destroy the Russian Army, which had withdrawn in good order, which still retained considerable matériel, and which even managed to take the offensive, in full winter, in the vicinity of Leningrad, in front of Moscow, and in the Ukraine.

On December 7, 1941, the United States, attacked by Japan at Pearl Harbor and in the Philippines, entered the war. "It is for us the assurance of victory," declared General de Gaulle in London, and all the French except a few traitors thought as he did. Despite all the suffering, an immense hope surged up again.

In the Occupied Zone, incidents multiplied: sabotage in the factories and on the railways, attacks against German officers or soldiers, vengeance exacted among the accomplices of the enemy. The repression was ferocious. Hundreds were arrested under the mere pretext that they were of Jewish descent, that they belonged to the Communist party, or that they were believed to have sympathy for the movement of General de Gaulle. Numerous hostages fell before German firing squads. But terror was powerless before the rising tide of resistance.

Marshal Pétain found himself obliged to express, at the same time, deference toward the executioners and compassion for the victims. On December 8 he addressed to Hitler a personal message in which he condemned "these odious attacks against the occupation army" and promised "to use all the means in his power to discover and arrest the authors of these crimes whose baseness has filled all the French people with horror." But the next week Vichy acknowledged in an official communiqué that the number and frequency of the executions had produced a "deep uneasiness." The Government, it was said, had hoped, after repeated démarches, that executions of innocent hostages would be less numerous, account being taken of the fact that it had voiced its disapproval of the attacks and that its own police cooperated in the arrest of the real culprits. And it remained to be seen whether the word "culprit" applied. The same communiqué did not hesitate to use this word in connection with the "Jewish-Bolsheviks" arrested in Paris several days before under orders of General von Stülpnagel, although no precise accusation could be brought against them. It was enough, according to Vichy, to be a Jew, a Communist, or a De Gaullist to deserve being put to death without any other form of procedure.

Between the people of France who were struggling for their freedom and their so-called chiefs, the gap widened each day. Where were the illusions cherished at Montoire on the possibility of rallying the country by able propaganda to a policy of collaboration? Only one year had gone by, but the difficulties Vichy had prided itself on being able to iron out had continuously increased. The food supply grew more and more precarious. Green vegetables and fruit, which during the summer enabled the people to add in some way to their meager rations, were not to be found.

The winter was hard, and it was impossible even to keep warm. Transportation was disrupted: the French railway lines were obliged to hand over many cars for the Russian campaign.

What were left were not enough to supply the great centers with coal. In Vichy's own government offices the civil servants sat wrapped in their coats, and in the morning they would find the ink frozen solid in the wells. Most of the raw material stocks were depleted. Numerous factories were closed, and their workers went on relief. Discontent was growing. Riots broke out at Nîmes and Montpellier in the food markets, before closed or nearly empty stores. In his New Year's speech the Chief of State recognized with anguish that the "war continues," that the "National Revolution has not spread from the domain of principles to enter that of facts," and that "circumstances do not favor enthusiasm." The only conclusion he drew was to reaffirm his principles and promise that accomplishments would follow. If some patriots, less and less numerous, remained stubborn in their blind confidence, it was because, taking their wishes at face value, they supposed that Pétain was secretly resisting the pressure of German demands, and that he was wishing, also secretly—as they were—for an Allied victory.

If, in truth, the men of Vichy were not wishing and hoping for such a victory, they were nevertheless obliged to reckon with it in their calculations. It was a new element that did not exist before December, 1941. Till then, the hypothesis which seemed at once most desirable and probable was that of a peace of compromise. Now, Russian resistance and the United States' entry into the war made a German defeat possible. It was thus necessary to maintain good relations with Washington, in the hope that the Allies might let the Vichy regime remain after the war in consideration of some purely *pro forma* concessions to liberal ideology. This was not an easy undertaking. The distrust of the United States for the Pétain-Darlan Government was more acute than ever—this was easy to see—since America was at war. The slightest gesture of collaboration, military or semimilitary, with the Axis powers, from now on was at the risk of being taken by the United

States as a threat against itself. One could no longer count on America's relative indulgence as at the time when England alone was waging war in the Mediterranean. The dispatches American correspondents sent their papers gave little credence to Vichy's possibilities for resistance. On December 15, John Elliott wrote: "Marshal Pétain is undoubtedly acting according to his lights, but his lights are getting dim." He added that there was "a feeling of almost complete discouragement" in American circles in Vichy.

It could be forecast that, since Hitler might fear losing the war, the pressure exerted by the victor would continue to increase. In the eyes of the Germans, the policy of collaboration had produced only infinitesimal results. The hostile sentiments of the French were known to them, and they reproached their Vichy associates for not having known how or not having wanted to impose more energetic measures. They accused them of getting ready to betray them. The extremist elements of the General Staff, the Gestapo, and the National Socialist Party did not hesitate to urge openly a change of attitude toward France. It was necessary, according to them, to rip down the tottering Vichy regime and govern the conquered territories directly as in Bohemia or in Poland.

This is where eighteen months of humiliation had led France—eighteen months of weakness and wavering. The Pétain-Darlan regime did not inspire confidence in any one: in the French, or in the Americans, or in the Germans. The men of Vichy were not sure of their ground themselves. After having deceived and misled every one—including the Germans—they were now going about the impossible task of reassuring every one—including the Americans. This was the whole story of the second winter.

In order to insure absolute unity in the interpretation of events, the control of the French press was tightened more and more.

At the beginning of the war, newspapers had been subjected,

before publication, to a censorship that cut out certain news or commentaries. Sometimes a single word was cut out from a sentence. Sometimes an entire article was forbidden, and there remained only the headline and the signature of the writer. The printed sheets rolled off the presses with white spaces of various sizes, and the editors often enlivened these blanks with caricatures of the censorship, named "Anastasie" and portrayed as an old spinster handling a huge pair of scissors.

Jokes were now no longer welcome under Vichy's dictatorship. "Anastasie," touchy, allowed herself to be caricatured no more. "Blank spaces" disappeared, since it was not only before the printing but even before the editing that the censorship was enforced in conformity with the system applied in Germany from 1933 on. Every morning, newspaper editors received from the official services of the Information Ministry a detailed list of "directives" completed by "notes of advice" (*notes d'orientation*). The directives indicated with extreme care not only what must be avoided, but especially what must be done. If the reproduction of certain news items was forbidden, others on the contrary must be printed. It was even clearly stated, for instance (Directive No. 455 of October 6, 1941), that a certain speech of Chancellor Hitler must be presented on the front page in three columns with a head praising German victories in Russia. The notes of advice went still further since they contained the themes imposed for the editorials. Nearly every day the newspapers received the order to publish what were termed with effrontery "original articles" on a predetermined subject: the opinion to be aired, the suitable tone, and the space to be used were determined in advance. Paul Marion declared one day at a press conference: "I request complete conformity." This was evidently the only way to gag French opinion. But, at the same time, this rigorous discipline aimed at giving Vichy's France the appearance it was desired that the foreigner should have of it.

To no less degree than the internal control of the press, the spreading of false rumors outside France played an important part in the appeasement campaign undertaken by Vichy during the second winter of the occupation. The role played by false news in this soothing enterprise was rather strange. From the latter part of November, 1941, to the beginning of January, 1942, no day passed without unverifiable rumors being launched in Vichy or in Berne. On November 22, three days after the resignation forced upon General Weygand, the rumor was spread that Marshal Pétain was soon going to meet Hitler and perhaps even Mussolini. The interview would take place in Versailles in the Galerie des Glaces where the peace treaty was signed in June, 1919. Vichy would renounce Alsace and Lorraine, adhere to the Axis, put North Africa and the fleet at the Reich's service for the Libyan campaign, and provide, moreover, three hundred thousand men to help occupy the conquered territories in Russia. On November 29, it was alleged that the Reich had obtained plane bases in North Africa, that the Tunisian port of Bizerte was to be occupied, and that "German tourists" were flocking to Morocco in such numbers that they already formed "the nucleus of a small army." Finally, all imagination records were broken when it was announced the day before Christmas that the Germans had started invading the Free Zone and Spain, that Pétain had abdicated, and that Admiral Darlan had come to power in Vichy.

Without being in a position to assert that these sensational announcements were deliberately launched by Vichy's official press services, I can only notice that these rumors were very cleverly used to prove that there was an abyss between what Hitler demanded and what Pétain yielded. The aim of this maneuver was, of course, to convince the French public and Washington that the old Marshal resisted as best he could the conqueror's pressure. The best proof of this was the gossip spread in the Free Zone and abroad in connection with the

meeting between the Chief of the French State and Marshal Göring at Saint-Florentin December 1. According to a strange document which had the appearance of a secret publication and was circulated from hand to hand under the very eyes of unseeing police, Pétain was purported to have said these proud words: "Germany has failed to fulfill most of its promises. Thus, I cannot myself go beyond the engagements made at the time of the armistice. I remain faithful to the principle of collaboration, but this principle implies relations as between equal and equal. If there is a victor on top and a vanquished at the bottom, it is no longer collaboration—it is a *Diktat*." Pétain was said to have added: "I am confident in France's destiny and in her recovery. As for me, for a man of my years, there is an escape very easy to carry out, that of passing from life to death." Then, as Göring supposedly was refusing to accept the memorandum expressing Vichy's grievances, the document continued, "Marshal Pétain merely placed it in the Germans' pocket and Marshal Göring left it there." It is all too plain today—after what we know now of the Weygand affair—that this language and these acts are not the language and the acts of Vichy.

Behind the false news, the denials, and the so-called "revelations," as behind a smoke screen, were hidden the real concessions the Pétain-Darlan regime had made to the Axis powers. According to news from British sources—which was not contested by Vichy—important deliveries of matériel, fuel, and supplies were made at the end of 1941 and in the beginning of 1942 to German and Italian armies operating in Libya under Rommel. Hundreds of trucks, coming from the military camps of North Africa, increased the offensive power of these armies in a campaign in which mobility was one of the decisive factors. The Italians had, more or less, the right to request this matériel on the strength of the armistice conventions; but these conventions did not forecast that vehicles thus transferred would be used at the same time for trans-

porting foodstuffs and supplies to a military theater of operations. Other things, moreover, were supplied which cannot be justified by the armistice clauses. Thus, Vichy agreed to draw from the slim Algerian stocks 5,000 tons of gasoline, more than two-thirds of which had, by March 15, been effectively transported to Libya. Also, from February 1 to 15 alone, four French ships, the *Saint-Germain*, the *Saint-Etienne*, the *Kabye*, and the *Nantais*, from Marseilles or Toulon, unloaded quantities of assorted merchandise and brand-new trucks of German, Italian, and French make for Rommel's army.

It must be emphasized that these concessions had been asked by the Germans for several months, and that, despite promises by Admiral Darlan, they had not been carried out sooner because General Weygand opposed them. Weygand feared, on one hand, to be faced with the opposition of a great majority of his subordinates and, on the other, to lose the benefit of the economic agreements concluded with the United States if it became obvious that North Africa was a supply base for Axis forces in Libya. Once Weygand was gone, those who commanded in his place displayed none of his scruples.

Other measures ordered by Admiral Darlan showed that, in North Africa, one could no longer count on the resistance of the local authorities to German pressure. In February, the battleship *Dunkerque*, seriously damaged by the British attack of July 3, 1940, made for Toulon from Mers-el-Kébir under its own steam to undergo repairs. This was done in spite of the fact that Admiral Leahy had asked during the preceding April that this transfer not be undertaken without a previous agreement—and Marshal Pétain had complied with his request.

How far would Vichy go in extending aid to the military enterprises of the Axis? On February 24, the Japanese paper *Yomiuri* reported the following statement as having been made by Jacques Benoist-Mechin: "The time has not yet come to know if, in order to reinforce the defenses of Madagascar, the French Government should or should not call upon Japan's

aid. However, if need be, taking into consideration our excellent collaboration with Japan for the defense of Indo-China, we would not hesitate." The Secretary to the Presidency of the Council retracted these words later on, but the uneasiness they had aroused lingered none the less.

Faced by such an array of incidents, the United States could no longer consider as a sufficient guarantee Vichy's hurriedly formulated neutrality declaration of December 15 when hostilities opened between the United States and the Axis.

On February 8, Sumner Welles revealed that Vichy had been urged to define its attitude clearly. It was learned later that President Roosevelt had sent Marshal Pétain a personal message February 10 in which he called attention to reports that the French had been helping the Axis forces, stating, in particular, that if France gave aid to the Axis beyond what was called for in the armistice terms she would place herself in the category of governments directly assisting the declared enemies of the United States.

Vichy answered on February 24 that it would lend no "military assistance to any belligerent in any theater of operations," that the French fleet would not be used for acts of war, and that no assistance would be extended to the Axis powers beyond the armistice terms.

Washington found these assurances unsatisfactory and instructed Admiral Leahy to make clear the opinions of the American Government that the delivery of foodstuffs, fuel, and trucks to any theater of operations was unmistakable military aid, and that Vichy must therefore make formal renunciation of such actions.

At that time, Admiral Thierry d'Argenlieu, High Commissioner of Free French possessions in the Pacific area, made public a note from the State Department which expressed the general principles of its policy toward France. This policy, in the words of the note, "has been based upon the maintenance of the integrity of France and the French Empire and the

eventual restoration of the complete independence of all French territories. Mindful of its traditional friendship for France, this Government deeply sympathizes not only with the desire of the French people to maintain their territories intact, but with the efforts of the French people to continue to resist the forces of aggression. In its relations with the local French authorities in French territories, the United States has been and will continue to be governed by the manifest effectiveness with which those authorities endeavor to protect their territories from domination and control by the common enemy."

The problem was thus put forth in plain terms which required a clear answer. The United States wished to maintain with all French authorities and all French territories the traditionally friendly relations. But, the Axis being the common enemy of France and the United States, such relations were possible only with French authorities who effectively resisted the Axis. Vichy was accused not only of failing to resist the Axis, but of actually favoring Axis moves in various parts of the globe.

The Government of Marshal Pétain, having to state its position and anxious to avoid a break which would have meant the ultimate failure of its foreign policy, gave the assurances asked. It renewed its promise not to let the war fleet fall into German hands; this settled the incident of the battleship *Dunkerque*. It undertook to forbid all belligerent planes and ships to enter air fields and ports of French possessions in the Western Hemisphere, while confirming private agreements by which certain rights of control and investigation had been given to the United States in these possessions. Thus, it was no longer to be feared that German submarines would seek shelter there during raids in the Caribbean. At the same time, Vichy declared that Madagascar would be defended against any attempt at occupation—whatever its source. This answered the fears aroused by Japanese claims and by the declarations

attributed to Jacques Benoist-Mechin. Finally, Vichy gave formal assurance that deliveries of fuel, trucks, and foodstuffs to the Italo-German forces in Libya would be immediately suspended and would not be renewed. This was equivalent to recognizing that such deliveries, under the circumstances, were a form of military assistance.

On March 26, it was officially declared in Washington that these assurances were "as complete as assurances can be," and that, consequently, an immediate break in diplomatic relations was avoided. It was added, however, that the relations were still precarious. They were—it was said—"on a day-to-day basis" because it was doubtful that Vichy could keep its promises in case of renewed German pressure.

After four months of uncertainty, reticence, and weasel-wording, the Pétain-Darlan Government had thus attained, at least in part, one objective it had set for itself during this second winter of the German occupation: to reassure the United States as to its intentions, prevent a break, and thus preserve the single chance of maintaining Vichy's dictatorial and reactionary rule in the event of an Allied victory. The success was due—it must be acknowledged—to a very adroit handling of the situation, helped by the publicity given to all the rumors dealing with possible use by the Germans of the French fleet and bases. For a full appreciation of Vichy's assurances we need to have what no one in America has—knowledge of what the German armistice commission had really requested and what the Pétain-Darlan Government had really granted or refused. By promising not to do certain things which Germany might not ask from it—or, at any rate, which Germany did not intend to impose by force—the Vichy regime provided itself with the practical possibility of doing all that Germany might ask. Such was the stratagem by which men who enjoyed no other liberty of action than what pleased Hitler managed to conciliate, thus far, their fundamental policy of collabora-

tion with Germany and maintenance of relations with her most powerful opponent.

Similar methods were used during that period, but with less success in relation to internal policy, in the prosecution of "those responsible for the defeat." This opened on February 19, 1942, before the Riom Court, with Edouard Daladier, Léon Blum, Guy La Chambre, former Generalissimo Gamelin, and Controller General Jacomet of the Army at the bar. There again the aim was to conciliate contradictory elements without regard for truth or equity.

After a disaster like that suffered by France in the summer of 1940, public opinion naturally demanded an inquiry into responsibilities and sought the punishment of the guilty. Common sense and dignity, however, stood in the way of investigation and punishment as long as vanquished France lacked complete independence, for there is no justice where there is no liberty. The young government of the Third Republic had understood this after the 1870-1871 defeat, and Marshal Bazaine, upon whose shoulders rested responsibility for the Metz capitulation, was not judged until 1873—after the complete evacuation of French soil by the German army of occupation.

The fixing of responsibility is in itself a complex problem because there are all kinds of responsibility. Some are of the collective order, and others are individual. Some are connected with the origin of the war, others with its conduct. It is morally impossible to take a stand on some while withholding judgment on the others. This is, however, what Marshal Pétain has tried to do and has done.

I do not believe there is a free man in the world who is not convinced today of Germany's responsibility for starting the war. Who has professed that the German race is a race of masters while others are its slaves? Who welded the German Army into an instrument of aggression and conquest with no precedent in the history of the world? Who annexed Austria?

Who dismembered Czechoslovakia and enslaved its people? Who invaded Poland? Who invaded Norway, Denmark, the Low Countries, Belgium, Luxembourg, and France? Who, after direct threats, occupied Hungary, Rumania, and Bulgaria? Who invaded and laid waste Yugoslavia and Greece? Who attacked the Soviet Union? These questions have but one answer: Hitler, National Socialism, the German people themselves, carried away by their old dream of universal domination.

In spite of all this, Hitler, who has always felt the possible to be without limits, has always believed that historic truth can be decreed if one has the power to enforce one's will. So he asked the vanquished—as soon as the armistice was concluded—for an admission of guilt! France had to recognize that war was caused by her own fault in September, 1939, just as Germany had been required, in signing the Versailles Peace Treaty, to accept responsibility for the 1914–1918 war.

It was not surprising that Pierre Laval, completely devoted to Germany's cause, should execute with servility, even in this respect, the orders of the Führer. One of his first speeches in July, 1940, before the National Assembly in Vichy, termed the declaration of war a "crime," as if it had been possible to avoid war by failing to declare it. Several weeks later, on July 30, 1940, the Riom Court was opened with authority to judge the former ministers and their close collaborators for "having committed crimes or offenses or betrayed the duty of their office in the acts which contributed to the passage from a state of peace to a state of war before September 4, 1939."

There appears to be no doubt that at that time the men of Vichy were ready to do all that Hitler expected of them. Sufficient proof was given by the declarations by which Georges Bonnet, Foreign Minister in September, 1939, endeavored to prove that it would have been possible, even after the German aggression and through Mussolini's mediation, to reach a satisfactory solution of the German-Polish conflict—that is, a second

Munich worse than the first. These declarations were reproduced, *in extenso* and with significant commentaries, by Vichy's official historian, Jean Thouvenin, in the booklet "By Marshal Pétain's Order," which was distributed in hundreds of thousands in October, 1940, by the propaganda services. A little later, under the pressure of French public opinion, Marshal Pétain seemed to become aware that, by allowing France to be held guilty of causing the war, he would lose all prestige and would come to be considered by his compatriots as a mere Gauleiter. But, after having proclaimed to the country that those responsible would be punished, he found it difficult to back out. So matters were dragged out. From time to time, a brief communiqué would announce that the Riom Court was continuing its inquest, was gathering evidence, was completing its documentation, or even that the defendants were preparing their defense.

Then a neat expedient was found: the pronouncement of condemnation by a simple decision of the Chief of State, without the motivation that is the rule in a judgment rendered by a court. This would give Germany the satisfaction she asked in connection with the origins of the conflict. Therefore Marshal Pétain, through Constitutional Act No. 7 of January 27, 1941, arrogated to himself the right to judge "the ministers and state secretaries, high dignitaries, and high officials in office for less than ten years." This entirely arbitrary act had another advantage: it made it easy to leave in the shade certain aspects of the defeat. If Vichy greatly desired to establish the responsibility of political leaders, it was desirable that silence be maintained on the errors of the General Staff and the High Command.

It is undeniable that the men who had governed France before 1939 failed. But their crime was not that they honored France's word by taking up arms for Poland's defense—for which Vichy reproached them. Rather it was that they sought too long to appease Hitler by needless concession and held

back from using force against him until it was too late. Their excuse was that they shared the fatal blindness of all the democracies throughout the world, democracies which loved peace too much to resign themselves to war—or even prepare for it.

If the French Army was not ready to try conclusions with the Wehrmacht in May, 1940, the responsibility fell for the most part upon the political chiefs, because they exercised supreme authority. But with the outworn concepts of our General Staff it is more than probable that we should have been beaten anyway. An impartial investigation into the military responsibilities underlying the defeat would necessarily have ended in involving, not only General Gamelin, but men such as Marshal Pétain and General Weygand, who had been the real sources of inspiration for the French Army between the two wars.

On May 16, 1939, General Weygand declared in London at a public conference that the theories of the Italian General Douhet on the use of assault planes had few partisans in France, and that "infantry remained the queen of battles." In the spring of 1939, also, Berger-Levrault, the publisher of military works, put on sale with much publicity a book entitled "Une Invasion, est-elle encore possible?" In which General Chauvineau did his best to demonstrate that, beyond the Maginot line and thanks to the superiority of the defensive over the offensive, France had no need to fear German threats. This book was prefaced by Marshal Pétain, who wrote, "Direct action of the air forces in battle is aleatory, the troops engaged in ground combat being placed so as to receive blows and return them." The French infantrymen of May, 1940, were able to see that they were well placed to receive the blows of the Stukas, but not to return them.

The opposition of the General Staff to new ideas like Colonel de Gaulle's on the use of tanks was still more acute if possible. General Duffieux, former Inspector General for the Tank

Corps and recognized interpreter of the Weygand-Pétain doctrine, wrote early in 1940: "How can one imagine that armored units could, as in Poland, rush without accompaniment into enemy defenses and penetrate in depth without running the risk of almost complete destruction?" In fact, this was precisely the peril it would have been advisable to "imagine" if one would cope with it.

On this point—in fact the most important one—the responsibilities of a purely military order are plainly evident to any man of good faith. Why Marshal Pétain was tempted to hide these responsibilities can be surmised. But, despite his previous services, how can one retain esteem and respect for a man who dares to declare himself judge—and sole judge without allowing explanations and possibilities for an appeal—over a trial in which he himself should appear among the accused?

Having assumed powers so abusive, Marshal Pétain hesitated long before using them. It was August before he made up his mind. To crown speeches in which he deplored the "confusion of the minds" and "the atmosphere of intrigue and false rumors" which prevented the National Revolution "from becoming a fact," he announced the creation of a Council of Political Justice, upon whose suggestions he would, later on, himself pass sentences.

Two additional months elapsed in which Germany more than once gave signs of impatience. On October 13, in a broadcast address, Reich Minister Funk announced to his German listeners that the Vichy Government was very probably going to convict those guilty of the war, thus touching a new height on the path of collaboration. Some forty-eight hours later Marshal Pétain spoke in turn to inform the French people of the decisions he had reached. Edouard Daladier, Léon Blum, Paul Reynaud, Georges Mandel, and General Gamelin were sentenced to detention for life in a fortress. Guy La Chambre and Controller General Jacomet were to remain interned. A communiqué issued later made it known that Pierre Cot, who

had sought shelter in the United States, also would have been condemned to detention in a fortress had it been possible to impose this sentence upon him effectively.

But—and this reveals a great deal on the impossibility of the French ever submitting to the Nazi yoke—the Council of Political Justice, although composed of stanch partisans of the National Revolution, refused to associate itself with an arbitrary act so unprecedented in France's history. Even under the old monarchy, the courts of justice (*parlements*) had always displayed their independence in the face of royal authority. When the sovereign wished to imprison a man in spite of them he issued a *lettre de cachet* and made no pretense of legality. Traditions which a people have respected and honored for centuries cannot be cast aside in a day! Marshal Pétain in his October 15 message made it clear that, in agreement with his Council for Political Justice, he was resolved to "preserve judiciary power from any infringements of the political power." Consequently, despite the sentences he had himself inflicted, "the Riom Court remained vested" and would pronounce judgment "in the shortest order," because it was necessary that "the gravity of the facts alleged against those mainly responsible for the disaster" be not "masked or clouded by mere political sanctions." The Chief of State declared that the country had a right "to the truth, nothing but the truth," and that the final verdict would be rendered "in the full light of day." Then he concluded with the words, "If you have been betrayed, you will not be deceived." Betrayed and deceived, we have been upon many instances for the last two years—and always by the same people.

One can question why, after having recognized the necessity of public debate, Marshal Pétain nevertheless assumed the infamy of these sentences rendered without judgment. Pétain may have believed that, despite the traditional independence of French magistrates, the Riom Court would hesitate to acquit accused already condemned by the Chief of State,

or even to pronounce against them lighter sentences than those previously inflicted by him as "political sanctions." The explanation which seems the most likely to me, however, is that Pétain had then already forecast, on account of Germany's plans, that it would become necessary to suspend the hearings before the court had a chance to reach a conclusion.

The trial opened February 19, 1942, in the old Palais de Justice of Riom which was heavy-laden with historical memories. This little town of Auvergne, which barely numbers ten thousand inhabitants, owes its reputation to one of the most famed *parlements* in the old France. Much remodeling was needed to put the building into shape, especially the installation of central heating. Great chandeliers which had, in times of splendor, ornamented the salons of the Tuileries were also installed. Sumptuous tapestries of Beauvais and Flanders, depicting scenes of the Odyssey, were borrowed from the national warehouses to decorate the walls. It was decided that court officials would wear a red robe and a white toque. The President of the Court and the State Attorney would, moreover, be clad in red coats with ermine collar. All this stage setting was abundantly described in the press—a circumstance which made it easier to do away with details of another order. It was also made known, later on, that two hundred and seven witnesses would be called and that the files gathered for the judges totaled no less than a hundred thousand pages.

How many pages would there have been if the trial had been given full scope? It was clearly announced from the very first day—by the prosecution's actions, the declarations of the President of the Court, and especially by directives to the press which were mischievously read in open court by Léon Blum's lawyer, who had managed to get his hands on them—that three elements would not be allowed to enter: (1) involvement of a foreign power (this cast out questions pertaining to the origins of the war); (2) the handling of diplomatic matters (under the pretense that all the documents were not yet available); (3)

questions involving the responsibilities of the General Staff or the conduct of the military operations.

Thus, it was possible only to examine into the political responsibilities themselves and then only from 1936; that is to say, for the so-called "Front Populaire" period as specified with such cynicism in "Press Directive No. 4." It was necessary "to explain at all occasions that the real trial was of the state of affairs from which the catastrophe arose, in order to allow the people of France, plunged in misery, to pass enlightened judgment upon methods of government of which they had become victims." This is what is termed, in Marshal Pétain's own language, discovering "the truth, nothing but the truth" and conducting a trial "in the full light of day."

However, once the debates opened, it became impossible to limit their development. If General Gamelin refused to answer questions and even to present his own defense, Edouard Daladier and Léon Blum spoke in the way to which they were accustomed; that is to say, freely. Léon Blum, after having proclaimed his faith in democracy, after having accused Germany of provoking the war, asked why the search for responsibility had not been extended to Marshal Pétain, Pierre Laval, and Camille Chautemps, all of them ministers at a time when Hitler already was menacing Europe. Then he cited a number of precise points which bore out that industrialists who have since made themselves conspicuous by their anxiety to collaborate with Germany, had displayed little enthusiasm in fulfilling war orders before 1939. Edouard Daladier made, for his part, a declaration crammed with facts on the opposition of the French General Staff to modern combat methods, and he endeavored to prove that the necessary matériel existed in May, 1940, but that the Command had not known how to use it.

The French press, subservient to the injunctions of the censorship, suppressed in its accounts all that was embarrassing in the statements of the accused. The foreign press of course

did not heed Vichy's orders. American newspapers, in particular, gave numerous accounts of the trial. Paradoxically enough, one can remark that, thanks to this full press coverage, the parody of justice which was taking place in Riom awakened in various American political circles illusions on the degree of liberty enjoyed by public opinion in France. The admirers of Marshal Pétain pointed out complacently how encouraging it was that there remained in the country of the "Declaration of the Rights of Man" judges who refused to condemn people without a previous hearing. This seemed to them a thing really worth marveling at. They simply forgot that the accused had been condemned even before the opening of the trial and had been prevented from putting forth all the arguments which would have allowed them to cast upon others the main burden of responsibility. But the confusion spread in various American circles was too happy a coincidence to be accidental. Once more, Vichy was trying to satisfy every one. It could tell the Germans, "You see we are sentencing them," while declaring to the Americans, "You see we allow them to defend themselves." This was going on at a time when Vichy, while aiding Rommel, was lavishing assurances on what it would or would not do with its war fleet and its colonies. I have often thought of the fable of La Fontaine in which the bat, alternately displaying its wings and its sharp little snout, tries to pass now as a bird, now as a rodent. Machiavelianism has its limits. One cannot with impunity awaken a taste for discussion among people who have not yet had time to accustom themselves to the loss of their liberties. All conversations in France echoed with the Riom debates. And people were again talking loudly, in all public places, on many subjects which Hitler and his Vichy associates would have preferred not to have them discuss.

The French all agreed, of course, to pin the war guilt on Germany. They also agreed that the real problem was not to

determine how and by whose fault the war had started, but why it had been lost.

In the *Figaro*, a royalist who had distinguished himself since the armistice by his zeal for the National Revolution wrote fearlessly: "The question is to know by whose fault France was ill prepared for many years in the face of an ever more threatening war. . . . France need not accuse herself before any one for having tried to render assistance to an imperiled ally. . . . Not a single Frenchman worthy of the name is inclined to lend himself to a game which would consist in justifying in advance, by who knows what inclination to ready repentance and prostration, the possible rigors of a peace France might have to undergo—but retaining the right, at least, to impute these rigors to her misfortune and not to her crimes." Reproduction of this article was immediately forbidden by Vichy censorship.

Evidently, this was not the type of comment for which the Germans had hoped. Berlin's discontent expressed itself, from the beginning of March, in a communication to the press by the spokesman of the Foreign Ministry of the Reich. On March 15, in a broadcast address, Chancellor Hitler publicly expressed his surprise at the turn taken by the Riom trial; and he found that "the French mentality was really impossible to understand." The *Völkischer Beobachter*, official organ of the National Socialist party, incriminated the Vichy regime directly by declaring that a government which allowed such a trial showed that it shared in the guilt for the war. The Paris press immediately undertook to show that the Riom trial ran the risk of making France lose all the benefits of collaboration. Finally, on March 19, Fernand de Brinon left personally for Vichy to tell Marshal Pétain that it was necessary to end quickly what the German papers called "a stupid farce."

At the same time, press and radio of the Occupied Zone were engaged in violent attacks on the United States, protesting against the "unbearable intimidations" suffered by France and

requesting an immediate break in diplomatic relations with Washington.

On this crisis—which presaged Laval's imminent return—the chronicle of this second winter ends. Vichy, having undertaken to reassure everybody, had succeeded after four months only in awakening the spirit of open criticism in France, in arousing the fury of the Germans while inspiring only a very limited confidence in the Americans. The beautiful formulas, the stage trimmings, the assurances misled nobody. The first breath of spring swept away these useless accessories. A few words whispered by a traitor into an old man's ear would be enough to make one understand that all this was but a useless comedy, and that it was a good time to return to the only thing that counted: help Germany win the war.

XIII

The Return of Laval

"I wish for a German victory." —PIERRE LAVAL

"When M. Laval speaks, it is in full agreement with me." —MARSHAL PÉTAIN

The circumstances and the motives which prompted Marshal Pétain to recall Pierre Laval to power in April, 1942, are to this day shrouded in a certain mystery. There is nothing surprising about this since the dictatorships are disinclined to clarity. As usual, the press of both zones merely published official communiqués. However, the foreign correspondents were authorized by the Vichy censorship to cable their papers rather lengthy commentaries and hypotheses which were sometimes ingenious but not very enlightening. But the principal phases of the intrigue could not be kept completely secret even if the link which connects them remains somewhat obscure. During a trip to London, I had the opportunity of gathering several complementary details on this subject which allow me, I believe, to give a plausible explanation of the facts already known.

During the winter of 1941–1942 the political situation of France stirred keen apprehensions in various German circles. The High Command of the occupation troops and the chiefs of the Gestapo, especially, were made anxious by the spreading spirit of resistance in the invaded territories. The frequency of incidents created among them a growing insecurity, and they accused Vichy of having carelessly fostered agitation by the unfortunate Riom trial.

Abandonment—through fear of displeasing the United States—of the program of semimilitary assistance to the Axis forces in Libya became a subject of complaint to Marshal

Pétain and Admiral Darlan. As a rule, it was found that Franco-German collaboration had yielded meager results. Supporters of a strong-arm policy—no rarity in Germany—concluded that, with a free rein, they could have obtained even fuller submission by the vanquished, more foodstuffs, more raw materials, more manufactured goods, more workers for the factories of the Reich, and more volunteers for the Anti-Bolshevik Legion.

These criticisms were aimed, through Vichy, at Otto Abetz, German Ambassador in Paris, who had always professed that, on the contrary, it was necessary to handle conquered France with caution in order to wring greater benefits from her. For eighteen months he had sought to enslave the hereditary enemy through methods the more efficient because they were subtle. These conformed, moreover, to the principles expounded by Adolf Hitler in "Mein Kampf" where he proclaims that a clever victor can obtain all he wishes from a defeated opponent if he will take care to present his demands one after another instead of imposing them all at one time.

Early in March, Fernand de Brinon rushed to Vichy to inform Marshal Pétain that Abetz's position was seriously endangered. The Führer, Brinon asserted, was more and more inclined to side with the High Command and the Gestapo. At their insistence, he seemed to be ready to impose upon the Occupied Zone direct administration by German military authorities. Paris would soon see a real Gauleiter, selected from the S.S. chiefs, as in Poland and Czechoslovakia. The extension of the occupation to all of France's metropolitan territory was also to be feared. Another possibility, just as threatening, was the setting up in Paris of a distinct government directed by men like Jacques Doriot or Marcel Déat and wholly devoted to the German cause. The only means of checking these dangers was to return openly to a policy of collaboration, oriented toward immediate and important results, and to confide its direction to men in whom Hitler could really place his confidence.

The Paris press buttressed Fernand de Brinon's intervention with Marshal Pétain by a violent campaign against the Vichy Government and the United States Embassy in France and loudly proclaimed that a ministerial reshuffling was pending. Former parliamentarians reappeared in Vichy who had done everything since the armistice—and, in some cases, before the armistice—to merit Germany's approval: men like Georges Bonnet, Anatole de Monzie, Gaston Bergery, Paul Faure. Pierre Laval frequently received at his Châteldon estate several of Admiral Darlan's collaborators who were preparing to take part in a new set-up: Pierre Pucheu, Jacques Benoist-Mechin, Paul Marion, and M. Joseph Barthélemy. Laval's son-in-law, René de Chambrun, was used for liaison with other personalities—civilian or military—who did not yet dare to make direct contact with Laval.

The Marshal was anxious to save Otto Abetz, who, *mirabile dictu*, was considered in certain Vichy circles as a "friend of France." He wanted this because he wanted collaboration; because, without Abetz, without collaboration, and with no foundation in the opinion of the French people, his regime would soon collapse. But he nevertheless was reluctant to recall Laval. Despite their apparent reconciliation of January, 1941, relations between the Chief of State and his former Vice President of the Council had not improved in the least. Pétain continued to see in Laval the man who had rudely insulted him, who had plotted to strip him of his power.

A Senator of Seine-et-Oise, M. Reibel, who had enjoyed a certain notoriety several years before, emerged from the shadows to suggest to the Marshal and to his Chief of Secretariat, Henri Dumoulin de la Barthète, a combination that would allow them to eliminate both Darlan and Laval. Joseph-Barthélemy, Justice Minister, would be called upon to head a Government in which all notorious collaborationists would be allowed to sit—except Laval—and in which Reibel himself would assume the duties of Interior Minister. This formula would not dis-

please Pétain since he would remain master because of the mediocrity of those involved. But this solution had to be accepted by the Germans. It was impossible to ask Fernand de Brinon to sound them out on this since he was a Laval man. So Reibel advised the use of Colonel Fonck, who had been one of the heroes of France's aviation during the other war and who had for a long time kept up a personal friendship with Göring.

Fonck, quite flattered with the role he was to play and already seeing himself Air Minister in the new Government, scampered for Paris, from whence he planned to leave for Berlin. But he made the mistake of talking. The Gestapo asked for explanations, seized his papers, kept him under surveillance for several days.

The incident had repercussions. Otto Abetz, seeing through the scheme, again sent Fernand de Brinon to Vichy March 19 to inform the Marshal that he must choose between Laval in Vichy and a Doriot-Déat Government in Paris.

The Marshal agreed to meet Laval, and the interview took place March 26 at Randan, twenty kilometers from Vichy. The French press was forbidden to mention it, but foreign correspondents were allowed to say the interview had taken place "at the request of Pierre Laval," who wished "to impart certain information to the Chief of State."

After this conversation, Laval left for Paris to reach an agreement with Abetz on the formation of a new Government. It was necessary, this time, to give Berlin the unmistakable impression that there would no longer be found in Vichy any impediment to collaboration. For this, all powers had to be concentrated in Pierre Laval and Pétain had to be relegated to purely honorary function. Darlan must be shorn of all authority in the Administration and the principal portfolios shared by politicians notable for devotion to German interests.

On April 2, Laval had a new interview with Pétain at the Sévigné pavilion in Vichy. The Marshal understood that he

was being asked to retain only the mere semblance of power, and the conversation led to no immediate conclusions. Laval expressed his irritation by the unusual publication of a personal communiqué in which he declared he had felt it his duty to confer with the Chief of State because of the deterioration of France's external situation. These talks were now over, he added.

Actually, they were to continue for several days—but with Admiral Darlan. The time had come when it was necessary to yield. As early as January, 1941, Pierre-Etienne Flandin, then Foreign Minister, had predicted in cables to all the French diplomatic missions that, under German pressure, the Marshal might one day be obliged to recall Laval despite his grievances against him. He believed at that time that an ultimatum by Hitler himself was needed to force the return of his French disciple to the Vichy scene. He did not foresee that, a year later, the Vichy regime would reach such a point where a mere machination engineered by Otto Abetz and Fernand de Brinon—men of secondary importance—would turn the trick.

On April 14, an official communiqué announced that Marshal Pétain, Admiral Darlan, and Pierre Laval, after consultation, had decided "to proceed to the constitution of a Government established upon a new basis." At the same time—first satisfaction granted to Germany—a law suspended the Riom trial.

At the last moment, everything was nearly called off when the former Parliamentarians who had been sounded out by Laval withdrew their support. This withdrawal appears to be corroborated by reliable testimony, but the motives which prompted it are obscure. It seems that the entourage of Marshal Pétain and Admiral Darlan spread a rumor that the combination would be ephemeral, the situation of Otto Abetz being precarious and Laval being unsure of Adolf Hitler's final consent.

Formation of the new ministry could not be announced

until April 18. This ministry, aside from Laval, was composed merely of straw men so that France had as ministers or state secretaries men with no other right to their posts than their pro-German zeal: men like Jacques Leroy-Ladurie, Fernand de Brinon, Jacques Benoist-Mechin, and Paul Marion. Only one man was of any importance in the Government, and that was Pierre Laval, President of the Council and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Interior, and Propaganda. He now had all that Pétain had refused him in December, 1940: the right to select his own ministers who would depend upon him alone and the title of Chief of the Government.

Admiral Darlan was excluded from the combination, but he maintained, under direct authority of the Chief of State, the command of all the land, naval, and air forces as well as the title of heir apparent to Marshal Pétain. This last consideration does not seem to have disturbed Laval much. If Marshal Pétain were to disappear, his testament would probably not turn out to be of any greater practical importance than President von Hindenburg's designation, in August, 1934, of von Papen as his successor.

Moreover, if Admiral Darlan, as Commander in Chief, was not under the control of the Chief of Government, the three Ministers of War, Navy, and Air were. It is rather revealing that Laval selected, as War Minister, General Eugène Marie Bridoux, who had been liberated from imprisonment by the Germans. It was certainly the first time in history that the French Army had found itself commanded by a chief under oath not to bear arms against the invader of his country.

It is better to omit the brief message with which Marshal Pétain on April 19 exhorted the French to give proof, once more, of their "wisdom" and "patience." There emanates from this harangue only a melancholic admission of impotence. It is rather to Berlin that one must look for authorized hints on the real significance of Laval's return to power. On April 18 a Wilhelmstrasse communiqué lauded Laval for understand-

ing the needs of the New Order in Europe and making himself the staunch opponent of Bolshevism; but it warned him also that, in collaboration, nothing serious had been accomplished, and that it was necessary to begin again. This amounted to telling the French that their chief would obtain from the victor no advantage unless it were dearly bought through concessions.

German authorities in the occupied territories hastened to show that they had no intention of modifying their terrorist methods in the slightest degree. On April 20, thirty hostages were executed in Rouen. Some twenty more were shot by a firing squad at Saint-Nazaire the next day.

But all this was only a passing disappointment for Pierre Laval. The very day of the Rouen massacre, in a speech at once crafty and violent, he showed the French the broad lines of the policy he intended to follow. He asserted, as he had already done in July, 1940, that peace could have been preserved had he been heeded before, and that the French Government had committed "a crime" by declaring war in September, 1939. He asserted that, having no share in responsibility for his country's trials, he would do all he could to ease them. He promised peasants and workers a happier future: "This war," said he, "carries within it the seeds of a real revolution. . . . In the New Europe socialism will prevail, a socialism that will take into account the national character and the aspirations of every nation." It was at once a declaration of his adherence to Hitlerian ideology and a repudiation of the reactionary program of the National Revolution as Marshal Pétain had conceived and preached it for twenty-two months.

Regarding foreign policy, Laval reaffirmed his faith in a policy of "reciprocal confidence" and loyal collaboration with Germany. "It is necessary," he said, "to help Germany win the gigantic war she is waging against the Soviets or resign ourselves to disappearing from the civilized world." He then concluded by a vicious attack against England, whom he held responsible for the misfortunes of France.

This whole long harangue could have been condensed in a few words: complete submission, in domestic and foreign matters, to Hitler's wishes.

This speech at least had the virtue of dropping all pretense. None could any longer doubt that—to use again an expression of Marshal Pétain—Pierre Laval was a “German agent.” None could any longer doubt that the National Revolution—this chimera used by the fifth column to lull to sleep the patriotism of part of the French bourgeoisie—had been definitely cast aside as superfluous. There remained over all this only a discouraged old man and a vainglorious Admiral, both of them powerless to safeguard anything—even the façade of anything.

In this month of April, 1942, no one, at any rate, was misled in Washington. Some twenty-four hours before Laval's return to power was officially confirmed, the Undersecretary of State, Sumner Welles, took the initiative, in a note addressed to the United States Ambassador in Vichy, in flaying “that handful of Frenchmen who, in contempt for the high tradition of liberty and individual freedom which has made France great, have sordidly and abjectly, under the guise of ‘collaboration,’ attempted to prostitute their country to that very regime in Germany which is bent upon nothing else than the permanent enslavement of France.” Diplomatic language rarely attains such a degree of frankness. Moreover, the same note confirmed with eloquence the traditional Franco-American friendship and, refusing to confuse the French people with their oppressors, ended on this promise: “The Government and people of the United States will continue to maintain unimpaired their full respect for the sovereign rights of the people of France. They may continue to be confident that by the victory of the United Nations those rights will be restored intact to them.”

This solemn guarantee was considered in Vichy as a “strange document written for propaganda purposes and in an effort to trouble opinion,” and in Berlin as “pure and simple insolence.” Two days later, on April 15, American nationals still

in France were urged by the State Department to return to the United States immediately. The *New York Times*, in the title over an editorial, summarized America's opinion in three words: "Laval is Hitler." On April 18, Sumner Welles announced during his press conference that Admiral Leahy had been called home for consultation after information establishing that "the new French Government was composed of elements dominated by Laval with all that it implies." Secretary of State Hull, questioned in turn by newspapermen on April 21, renewed the declarations he had made June 13, 1941, at the time of the Syrian crisis, in which he denounced the policy of the "Darlan-Laval group" as detrimental to the "common interest" of the French and American people. Finally, on April 28, President Roosevelt addressed the French in grave and moving terms:

"Recently," he said, "we have received news of a change in the Government in what we used to know as the Republic of France—a name dear to the hearts of all lovers of liberty, a name and an institution which we hope will soon be restored to full dignity.

"Throughout the Nazi occupation of France, we have hoped for the maintenance of a French Government which would strive to regain independence, to reestablish the principles of 'liberty, equality, fraternity,' and to restore the historic culture of France. Our policy has been consistent from the beginning. However, we are now concerned lest those who have recently come to power may seek to force the brave French people to submission to Nazi despotism.

"The United Nations will take measures, if necessary, to prevent the use of French territory in any part of the world for military purposes by the Axis powers. The good people of France will readily understand that such action is essential for the United Nations to prevent assistance to the armies, or navies, or air forces of Germany, Italy, and Japan. The overwhelming majority of the French people understand that the

fight of the United Nations is fundamentally their fight, that our victory means the restoration of a free and independent France and the saving of France from the slavery which would be imposed upon her by her external enemies and her internal traitors.

"We know how the French people really feel. We know that a deep-seated determination to obstruct every step in the Axis plan extends from Occupied France through Vichy France to the people of their colonies in every ocean and on every continent."

These words were clear. And the decisions which followed several days later were equally clear. On May 4, the United States Government announced that it approved without reservation the occupation by British forces of the Diego Suarez naval base on Madagascar Island and that any warlike act permitted by Vichy in consequence of this occupation will be regarded in Washington as an attack against the United Nations as a whole."

At the same time, an American mission was sent to Martinique to obtain from the local French authorities certain complementary guarantees assuring that French Caribbean possessions and war or merchant ships which happened to be in their ports would not be utilized, on Laval's orders, to the military advantage of the Axis powers. In a communiqué published May 9, the State Department took care to indicate that the negotiations would be carried out with Admiral Robert, High Commissioner for the French West Indies, who was "recognized as the ultimate governing authority of French Caribbean possessions. This amounted to stating that the American Government refused to deal with Laval on matters affecting the security of the Western Hemisphere. As was to be expected, Laval retorted haughtily that Admiral Robert was under his orders, and that he could not, consequently make any valid engagement without having first been authorized by Vichy. The direct talks were nevertheless continued at Fort de

France and, if they did not achieve complete understanding on all points, their principal objectives were attained from the start.

Despite this very firm attitude on the part of the American Government, the Paris press after the formation of the new Laval Government, completely halted its campaign for a rupture of diplomatic relations between Washington and Vichy. Laval is supposed to have said himself, at the end of April, that he would never assume the initiative in such a break and that, if it did take place, the responsibility would fall upon President Roosevelt.

For reasons, which some may think obscure but which in my opinion may readily be surmised, in part at any rate, Germany wished that the links be maintained between the so-called "Government" it tolerated in the Free Zone and the most powerful of the United Nations. These links could become useful to the Axis the day it appeared opportune to make overtures toward a peace of compromise, and it was evident that not only Laval, but also Pétain was only too pleased to lend themselves to such a role to crown the success of their foreign policy. On the other hand, Berlin and Vichy had for a long time based exaggerated hopes on possible action by the isolationist, anti-British, and anti-Soviet elements in American public opinion and they did not want to lose their means of exercising influence on these elements by discreet and crafty propaganda. The fact that Washington continued to negotiate with a Government which was an Axis vassal was susceptible of being interpreted as bait for more widespread negotiations. What would have been the reaction of certain American circles if Germany, having obliged Russia to make a separate peace, had proposed to the Anglo-Saxon powers, through Vichy, common action against Japan? Such hypotheses may appear chimerical but the essence of Hitler's policy—experience should have taught us—is not to neglect any possibility, however distant, however fantastic.

Other considerations—actual and realistic this time—have tipped the scales in the same direction, and we can here put our finger on what may be called Pierre Laval's secret. A break with Washington would have caused in French public opinion reactions detrimental to Germany and Vichy. During the spring of 1942, Hitler was apparently worried by the potential opening of a second front in Europe. It was thus a matter of caution to avoid all that might incite the populations of the occupied territories to stiffen their resistance to the invader and his accomplices. It was necessary, on the contrary, to discourage and break this resistance by all means, while at the time taking the required measures to reinforce the defenses of the Continent against an eventual landing by the United Nations. Laval—if one observes his doings after his return to power—had no other role, as far as France was concerned, than that of carrying out this Hitler plan.

All his actions, in fact, aimed either at dissociating and demoralizing the forces of resistance within France or at securing new elements of power for Germany.

It was typical that he should begin by challenging, in an insidious manner, Marshal Pétain's prestige, or whatever remained of it. If, as a rule, people in the Occupied Zone paid but little attention to the person of the Chief of State, there remained in the Free Zone and even more in North Africa, unenlightened patriots who in good faith still hoped against hope that the father of capitulation would one day finally order or allow the resumption of resistance. Laval, complete master of all phases of information, did his best to ridicule these naïve hopes. In the early part of June, the Vichy radio lavishly spread these weary words spoken by Marshal Pétain to an audience of French officers of the Armistice Army: "The French Army must entertain no aggressive spirit. It would mean our ruin. It is impossible for the country to ignore its defeat. I spent three months after the armistice repeating this

to my entourage and I repeat it still to myself every morning. This ought to deprive us of all pretension."

I do not, on the other hand, know of anything more lamentable than that scene of June 11 when, in the presence of delegates of the Legion of War Veterans, Marshal Pétain warmly shook hands with the traitor, saying: "M. Laval has won my entire confidence, not only by his words, but by his deeds. There is no longer the slightest difference between us. We walk hand in hand. When Laval speaks it is in agreement with me. And when I, myself, speak, it is in agreement with him." Thus, promoted to the dignity of spokesman for Marshal Pétain, Laval seized the first opportunity, several days later, to declare: "I wish for a German victory."

Toward the end of April, General Giraud—considered one of the most capable chiefs of France's Army during the spring of 1940—succeeded in escaping from a German jail and in returning to France. Laval, fearing that this exploit might fan the hopes of French patriots, strove to convince Giraud that, in the country's interest, he should return and give himself up, Germany having promised to free him within the hour if he signed the customary agreement never again to bear arms against the Reich. Having failed in this, Laval attempted to bring Giraud into discredit—in his speech of June 22—by pretending that an agreement had been reached with Germany for the liberation of numerous French prisoners, but that the carrying out of this agreement had been suspended in reprisal after "a sensational escape."

The fate of the prisoners has been for all Frenchmen, for over two years, one of the main causes for suffering and worry. They numbered at least 1,200,000, and there were few families without a member behind barbed wire. The treatment prisoners undergo and the insufficient food they get leads one to fear that many among them may never return. By decimating them through famine and disease, Hitler would sap France's vitality. In this war, in which she fought with all her strength for only

a few weeks, France risks losing more men than during the 1914-1918 hecatombs. Even if Germany is finally vanquished, she will be confronted by an exhausted and anemic France, and German racism will, despite the military defeat kept in store for it, have realized one of the essential points in its program. Already, the absence of the prisoners and the hardships of living in France have had these results: Marriages dropped 40 per cent, births 33 per cent, infantile mortality increased 10 per cent, adult mortality, 22 per cent, and that of old men 43 per cent.

Whenever there arose a question of the collaboration policy with Germany, Vichy has let the people hope—in innumerable official declarations and especially through the speeches of Marshal Pétain—that, as payment for concessions made, France would obtain the return of a number of prisoners. These hopes have constantly been frustrated, whatever the shameful price the men of Vichy paid in advance for promises never to be kept. It was soon to become clear that Germany would never relinquish the token assurance represented in the French prisoners unless this assurance were made good in some other form by sending French workers into German factories.

Shortly after his return to power, Laval strove to stimulate, by every means, the recruitment of French workers for the Reich. Speeches, posters, and pamphlets made lavish promises of handsome salaries, more plentiful food than in France, and many other advantages. Special offices for enlistment were opened everywhere, and pressure was exerted upon the unemployed. Factories were shut down so that their staffs would have no alternative but work beyond the Rhine. A worker had to choose: misery in France or a breadwinning job in Hitler's service.

In his speech of June 22, Laval set side by side the "voluntary" departure of workers for Germany and the return of imprisoned farmers. "It is to you," he told the workers, "our prisoners will owe their liberty. You have remained in your

factories while the peasants were in the army. Those who have exposed their lives for you are now in captivity. During these two years, they have endured the accumulation of miseries spared to you. Chancellor Hitler has just decided to liberate an impressive number of farmers who will be able to return to France as soon as you arrive in Germany. Today, it is you, the workers, who will repay the soldiers the good turn you received from them. It is the beginning of the exchange."

With this pathetic tone, the theme of Laval's speech was an incitement to civil war. It was again a matter of playing Germany's game by trying to divide the French people. What could the peasant families really be thinking when the Chief of the Government said in effect: "At the time of mobilization, the State took your children to send them to the war. The workers remained in the factory, keeping their high salaries and the easy life. Now your children are in prison camps. They suffer from the cold, from hunger, and from every privation. You exhaust yourselves, for the lack of their help, in tilling your fields. To bring back your children, these workers who have benefited from their sacrifices need only go voluntarily to Germany where they will earn good money and live more comfortably than in France. But they are too selfish and too lazy to accept this. If your children are held prisoner, it is not the fault of generous Germany; it is not my fault; it is the fault of the French working class."

Let us recall that the man who speaks thus would have been unable to live, during a part of his youth, but for the subsidies of workmen's unions!

The friction between worker and peasant was, moreover, only one aspect of the fine work of disunion and corruption pursued in France by Laval on Germany's behalf. Others besides Laval attempted with oratory to woo the French into collaboration. But Pierre Laval preferred arguments more convincing than mere words. Neglecting principle, he appealed merely to interests. Every social group, isolated from the others,

he tried to seduce by proffering concrete advantages. To the workers he promised, on June 1, a raise in wages; he created for them in Paris, on June 14, "a committee for labor and social information," while letting them hope the Labor Charter would be revised and they might be allowed to select their representatives freely. Before the upper bourgeoisie—the industrialists and the financiers—he dangled the profits of economic collaboration. He did away with or relaxed the surveillance and control the preceding government had applied to make sure that farmers delivered all their produce to the market. In order to convey to the consumer the impression that the situation had been improved, rationing was loosened at the risk of draining reserve stocks. It was a broad and a systematic plan to win to the new regime the greatest possible number of Frenchmen. A young French economist, among the most able, Robert Vacher, has given a detailed analysis of this plan in an article in *France Libre* of July 15, 1942. His article appears to me indispensable to an understanding of the methods and the political aims of Laval's home policy.

The exchange of workers for prisoners remained the capstone of this policy. The conditions under which this exchange took place effectively demonstrate that Laval was much less interested in return of the prisoners to France than in furnishing Germany with the labor she needed. After his speech of June 22, it had been felt that workers and prisoners would be exchanged one for one. This betrayed a poor understanding of Pierre Laval's arithmetic. Only on August 11 did it come out that Hitler had merely pledged himself to liberate 50,000 prisoners on condition that France gave him 150,000 specialized workers. Thus, to obtain the return of a man exhausted by privation and most often incapable of resuming his former activity immediately, it was necessary to deliver to Germany three men in perfect health and in the flower of manhood. It is not certain, moreover, that the proportion agreed upon was scrupulously observed. On August 21, in declarations pub-

lished by the Paris German-language newspaper *Pariser Zeitung*, Jean Bichelonne, State Secretary for Industrial Production, announced that 4,000 factories had been closed for lack of fuel or raw materials and that, from June 1 to August 7, 42,000 workers had left France to seek work in Germany. But during this period, as shown by the official Vichy figures, only 1,000 prisoners of war were released.

This evidence shows the true motives of the mass emigration of workers Laval wished to start to the Reich. It might seem that Germany would find it advantageous to use on the spot the labor and machine tools of French industry by providing the necessary raw materials, or, more exactly, by returning part of the materials exacted from the country. But this fails to allow, on one hand, for the land transportation difficulties which might one day paralyze German war economy and, on the other hand, for the fears that second-front threats had aroused in Europe. The production of territories controlled by Hitler would be vulnerable if it continued to depend in part on the activity of factories located in the vicinity of possible invasion points. This is why Germany had been striving since spring to concentrate on her own territory almost all her industrial means in order to widen the distance which separated them from enemy air bases and avoid, above all, their falling into Allied hands in case part of the Continent should be recaptured.

By recruiting workers for German factories, in the last analysis, Laval extended to Hitler Germany assistance of a military character. In this aid not only the Occupied Zone, but the Free Zone and North Africa as well, where recruiting centers for workers also had been opened, were forced to participate. For two years, Germany had already been utilizing to suit herself the agricultural, mineral, and industrial resources of France and a great part of her Empire. The Reich wanted, moreover, to draw upon her man-power reserves, not only to

place tools in their hands, but also—as other Laval acts allow one to forecast—to make them bear arms.

The fact that the military, naval, and air forces of Vichy, in unoccupied France and overseas, continued directly dependent upon Marshal Pétain and Admiral Darlan did not prevent Laval from recruiting and arming other troops entirely devoted to him. There came to pass, little by little, a situation similar to that which existed in Germany at the beginning of the National Socialist regime, from January, 1933, to August, 1934. Up to the death of President von Hindenburg, Chancellor Hitler feared the Reichswehr might take a stand in opposition to him; but he had his own army composed of the semimilitary formations of the Party: brown-shirt legions of the S.A., black-shirt sections of the S.S., police corps at Göring's orders. But, finally, the Reichswehr took its oath of allegiance to him. It is interesting to consider how many similarities there are between the evolution of the Vichy regime and the experiences of Germany during the period when Hitler was working to consolidate his power.

The troops Laval sought to organize had a great advantage over the regular army. They could operate in the Occupied Zone, train under the surveillance of German officers, and receive, at the opportune time, all the modern armament they needed. In contrast, the forces commanded by Admiral Darlan depended in all respects upon the good will of the armistice commissions. Their armament, their ammunition, the fuel necessary for their transportation, the material to clothe and feed them, was gathered in the Free Zone and North Africa in special warehouses under control by these commissions. Germany thus kept in store at the same time the means of paralyzing the regular army and transforming Laval's militia into a formidable instrument of civil war—and perhaps even for a foreign conflict.

At the beginning of June, the gendarmerie, which was recruited among an elite of petty officers and which has always

been dependent upon the War Ministry, was attached to the Interior Ministry under the personal control of Laval, who thus directly ruled all police formations.

On June 27, the "Anti-Bolshevik Legion" of Jacques Doriot and Eugene Deloncle became the "Tricolor Legion." Its mission consisted in recruiting volunteers not only to fight the Soviets, but also to "defend French interests and French civilization wherever they may be menaced." The Committee which headed the Legion was presided over by Jacques Benoist-Mechin. He addressed to the Legionnaires a message which ended with these words: "Today you fight against the Soviet Union. Tomorrow, perhaps you will fight somewhere else." General Eugene Marie Bridoux, War Minister, in a circular, urged French division generals to encourage enlistments for it: "The French Army," he declared, "cannot be absent from the field of battle where the fate of Europe is being decided. It is thus necessary to start recruiting and training from now on the troops to be dispatched to the Russian front." He added that these troops, which from the beginning had worn the German uniform with a tricolor armband, would soon be called upon to wear the French uniform. Upkeep of the Tricolor Legionnaires was, at least in part, charged to the State. The *Journal Officiel* of July 29 published a decree setting up an initial 10,000,000-franc credit for these troops.

Shortly after the armistice, all the associations of veterans had been grouped, by Government ruling, in a single association, the "French Legion of Veterans," under the honorary presidency of Marshal Pétain. This league was soon to take a political character by the mere fact that all the partisans of the new regime—even if they had never been in the army—were allowed to join it as "Friends of the Legion." A little later, when opposition to Vichy rule grew manifest throughout the country, the two groups were welded into a single organization called "The Legion of Veterans and Volunteers of the National Revolution." Its chief was François Valentin, young

Nancy deputy, whose conduct has been brilliant during this war as officer in the *chasseurs à pied*. Despite his enthusiasm for an authoritarian form of government, none could doubt his patriotism.

Upon taking power, Laval seized control of the Legion of Veterans and replaced François Valentin by Raymond Lachal, an obscure politician in his pay. To the post of "Permanent Legion Delegate to the Government," he promoted Joseph Darnand, who had once been one of the most turbulent chiefs of the Cagoulaards. Darnand immediately established within the Legion a special group, the "Services d'Ordre Légionnaires," known by the abbreviation S.O.L. The method of their enlistment and their role were in all ways similar to those of the Nazi S.S. On July 12, upon his return from a trip to Germany, Darnand presided over the solemn swearing in of the S.O.L. He told them that, while continuing to belong to the Legions of Veterans, they would be attached en bloc to the Tricolor Legion, so as to fight in its ranks against Bolshevism and "for the defense of the French Empire." Admiral Platon, State Secretary who spoke after him, declared: "If circumstances require it, the Legionnaires are prepared for all sacrifices in order to spare France misfortunes worse than the defeat."

What was Laval's aim?

Germany feared—in the event of a second European front and Allied successes on the Continent—a mass uprising of the French people. The bands armed by Laval would then be given the job of repressing this uprising, unless called upon to participate alongside the Wehrmacht in the military operations themselves. In both cases, the aim was to cooperate with the occupying force by providing it with auxiliary assistance. Vichy propaganda confirmed these designs. Not a single argument was overlooked, either to discourage those who saw deliverance in a United Nations landing or to represent this landing as a menace aimed against French lives and property.

The protest formulated by Vichy after the Dieppe raid and the bombing of military objectives over Rouen by American Flying Fortresses is most enlightening. The idea was to justify in advance a military collaboration with the Reich "for the defense of French soil."

Laval's return to power is explained then by a unique necessity: Vanquished France must help Germany win the war. There is only one word for that—treason. The political future of Laval depended upon the way he acquitted himself, at his master's whim, in this work of treachery. Upon several instances during the month of April, Berne dispatches indicated that Hitler might decide to replace Laval by a man such as Doriot or Déat. Laval, despite all his ignominy, did not seem a killer. If Germany felt it necessary to resort to terrorism against French resistance, she would have to have at her call men who would not hesitate at the shedding of blood. Thus the Laval Government did not necessarily represent the last stage in the evolution of the policy in effect in France since the armistice in the interest of the enemy by those responsible for capitulation. But one thing was certain—and Laval knew it: the day of France's liberation will also be, for the traitor, the day of judgment. Among the men who owed their fortune to Hitler's favor, Laval was one of those who ran the greatest risks of dying a violent death. History will say of him: "It would have been better if he had never been born."

Fighting France

But one enemy—the invader.

In June, 1940, those responsible for the capitulation were convinced that England would be obliged to make peace, that no one would dare dispute German mastery over Europe and the French people would resign themselves quietly to defeat.

Now more than two years have passed. Everyone can see to-day how the pseudo realists of Bordeaux miscalculated. All their hypotheses have been given the lie by facts. England has known how to withstand the most violent assaults. Soviet Russia and the United States have joined the opponents of the Axis. Every day the scales tip a little more in favor of the United Nations.

France did not resign herself to defeat. She did not desert the struggle against Germany. Those who governed her with the consent of Hitler and on his behalf succeeded neither in violating her conscience nor in corrupting her hope. Despite lies and menace, suffering and humiliations, the people of France have persevered without weakening along the path that will lead them to final victory and freedom.

Our enemies themselves bear this out: "The great majority of Frenchmen," stated the *Giornale d'Italia* on July 30, 1941, "still, at this hour, continue to feel toward Great Britain an unshakable sympathy. By what means can freedom be regained from the German occupation? By what means can the formidable force of the Reich be shattered? By what means can the predominating position that France occupied on the Continent be recovered? By what means can the sovereignty of the Empire be maintained? To these painful questions the French

answer from the bottom of their heart: through a British victory." The same paper was also to state on September 17, 1941: "France, thrown to the ground, lies powerless, feet and hands bound, helpless. . . . But she does not surrender and struggles with useless efforts instead of welcoming, in order to get back on her feet, the hand stretched out to her. At the bottom of her heart she thinks only of chasing the Germans and getting rid of the Italians." In March, 1942, the *Berliner Börsen Zeitung* noted: "The French people have not yet understood the meaning of the war. They continue to consider England their ally and it is from her they expect salvation." At the same time, according to the *Regime Fascista*, "General de Gaulle can count on the friendly attitude of three-fourths of the population of France; he embodies the secret hopes of all the French, whatever their party."

With unfailing instinct, the people of France pronounced themselves at the same time against the invader and against his Paris and Vichy accomplices. A few politicians, newspapermen, and businessmen may have, through ambition or self-interest, rallied to Hitler's cause, but they have succeeded in recruiting, among the popular classes as well as the middle class and petty bourgeoisie, only an infinitesimal number of partisans. And this by employing mendacious ideologies like anti-Semitism and anti-Bolshevism. If Marshal Pétain, despite his surrenders, managed to keep some prestige in various circles of the Free Zone, North Africa, and the distant reaches of the Empire, it was because these circles continued to see in him a man playing a Janus-faced game, a man who yielded to Hitler only to resist him more easily. Illusions of this kind are in themselves the best proof that French patriots are without exception unanimous in seeking the defeat of Hitler Germany.

In the Occupied Zone, it was soon clear that Vichy's authority and influence was practically nil. Nobody wasted his time finding chimerical distinctions between the Germans and the so-called "Government" they tolerated. In February,

1942, Fernand de Brinon summed up the reports he had received from the prefects of the invaded departments and wrote to Admiral Darlan: "In public opinion there persists mostly a hatred for the German"; "There is a unanimous refusal to follow the Government's collaboration policy"; "The functionaries of the French administration are considered by the population as mere agents for implementing the decisions made by the occupying authorities." This concept, the only one in conformity with reality, grew more and more widespread, even in the Free Zone, and gained ground against the Laval regime. At the same time, for their foreign and domestic liberation, the French people continued to fight by all the means at their disposal. Victory for them has not signified the mere crushing of Germanism. It has meant also the collapse of Vichy and punishment visited upon the traitors.

We must never forget that Hitler's war is total war. Through propaganda as well as through the force of arms, the Third Reich has been able to throw its yoke across the shoulders of most of Europe. While the fifth column managed, before the summer of 1940, to occupy decisive positions in various leading Paris circles, it failed completely after the armistice in its efforts to rally French public opinion. Otto Abetz supervised press and radio in the invaded departments. Paul Marion controlled, on behalf of and under the orders of the enemy, the newspapers and the broadcasting stations of the unoccupied territories. Never has an enterprise for the spreading of lies been more powerful. In spite of that, it was from the French-language radio programs of London that the French continued to draw their information and their reasons for hope. The obstinacy they displayed in their refusal to be convinced by German propaganda constituted one of the most significant defeats inflicted upon Hitler.

Many foreign witnesses have noticed this. The Germans were all over the Paris streets, but the French behaved as if they did not see them. The invader, blinded by his pride, has

not always understood the meaning of this silent protest. Some time ago, a German publication naïvely made fun of Parisians who did not know their own city and were nearly always unable to give precise information to Germans who asked their way or the name of monuments. The writer of the article was ignorant, without doubt, of the "Advice to the Occupied" circulated throughout France: "They are victorious. You must be correct with them. But do not, in order to win their good graces, meet their wishes. There is no hurry. Moreover, they would not be thankful to you in the least. You do not know their language or you have forgotten it. If one of them addresses you in German, make a sign of ignorance and continue on your way. If he questions you in French, do not consider yourself obliged to put him on the proper road by accompanying him for a short way. He is no *compagnon de route*. If, in the café or in the restaurant, he strives to strike up a conversation, you must give him to understand politely that what he is going to say does not interest you in the least. If he asks you for a light (*feu*), hand him your cigarette. Never, even in the most distant ages, has one refused to fire at (*feu*) one's mortal enemy."

It has always been a French trait to smile through the hardest trials. But you must truly be heroic not to complain and even to rejoice when the proximity of your enemy exposes you to receiving yourself the blows aimed at him. However, this is what happened every time Allied airmen came over France to destroy factories working for Germany. The collaborationist press has been obliged to admit this itself. Georges Suarez wrote in *Aujourd'hui* on March 10, after the bombing of the Renault works in Billancourt: "The De Gaullists, the Anglophiles, and the Bolshevophiles were applauding when bombs were falling several miles away on the heads of their compatriots. We have all witnessed this sight. These words in which the murderers were saluted as liberators, we have all heard." For its part, *Je Suis Partout* was indignant over "cer-

tain idiotic reactions" and declared: "When the Germans bombed Paris during the only raid they carried out over the capital, their bombs appeared the tangible demonstration of Germanic barbarism. Today the English bombs are blessed missiles." In the Free Zone, the *Avenir du Plateau Central*, which belongs to Pierre Laval, made similar assertions: "One can hear people of all social classes, in the offices, in the stores, in the cafés, upon street corners, say absurd things by which the bombings of France are happy events."

The resistance of the French people more than held in check Nazi propaganda. It also, to a great extent, paralyzed attempts of the invader to wring from his conquest a maximum of economic advantage. In the earlier part of 1942, the Vichy press was constantly lamenting that peasants were hoarding a great part of their harvests to evade requisitions. This question was later not aired so loudly because it was noticed in high quarters that these editorials encouraged the timid also to retain their products for consumption by the French alone.

In the factories, despite close surveillance by German engineers and foremen, sabotage has been carried out with the perfection of art. The poor maintenance of equipment caused by a shortage of lubricants is used as a pretext for accidents and poor workmanship. A badly adjusted spare part in a Paris factory is enough to cause an airplane to crash, a machine gun to jam, a tank to be put out of commission, or a shell to explode prematurely—or not at all. A simple error on an invoice sheet is enough to send different parts of a machine to the four winds.

Nothing better illustrates the resistance of the French working class than the failure of the campaign waged to recruit workers for the Reich. This recruiting was originated the very day of the armistice and long before Pierre Laval endorsed it as one of the main bases of his collaboration program. Every means was exerted. Unemployment was artificially created by the closing of numerous shops. Food rations far superior to those obtainable in France and monthly salaries of 5,000 to

6,000 francs were promised the volunteers, while they barely earned a third or a fourth of this in their present employment. Their feeling of national solidarity for liberation of the prisoners was also appealed to. All this was in vain. In June, 1942, Vichy's own radio told us that, to that date, only 154,000 workers from France were to be found in the Reich, and this figure included an important proportion of foreign workers who had established themselves in France before the armistice. During the same period, the man power recruited voluntarily or perforce by Germany in the conquered countries included 1,000,000 Poles, 280,000 Belgians, 200,000 Dutchmen, 150,000 Czechs, to which one must not forget to add 300,000 Italians.

One could estimate at 2,500,000, prisoners of war excluded, the total number of foreign workers hired by German industry or agriculture. France, despite Vichy's efforts, thus made, before the summer of 1942, only an insignificant contribution. This contribution seems to have increased during the summer and fall, but it was not sufficient in the eyes of Hitler since Laval obediently handed him—with utter disregard for humanity—the Jewish refugees of the Free Zone and decreed on top of that a regime of compulsory labor for all the French people.

The professional organizations of French workers, outlawed by the Vichy regime, have, moreover, pursued their action under cover. The unity of the workers has everywhere solidified a little around militant labor unionists who have become, at risk of their liberty and often of their lives, the most active and boldest agents of resistance. A single unified "Comité d'Action Syndicaliste" was secretly set up. The General Confederation of Labor and the Confederation of Christian Workers are both represented in this organization. Its members have succeeded in forwarding to the International Federation of Syndicalists a message expressing at once the hardships and the resolution of French workers: "Our country is pillaged

and betrayed . . . Our situation is pitiful . . . Our liberties are dead . . . We are not asking you to pity us, but we are asking you to maintain your confidence in us. We are not the accomplices of this treachery . . . We are prepared to do anything in order to help you—sabotaging in so far as we can the matériel for the enemy, undergoing the justified bombing of the factories working for Germany, following the watchwords you may forward to us . . .”

With the peasants and the workers, the entire nation except for a few traitors and a few visionaries, is participating in the resistance without distinction of social class, political party, or religious beliefs. Vichy propaganda often pretended that the work of Marshal Pétain was backed without reservation by the Catholic Church, but this assertion does not stand examination of the facts. The country priests, long accustomed to living in extreme poverty, refuse to turn religion into an instrument of social conservatism when it is the living message of Christ. They tolerate no compromise between the Gospel and Hitler's pagan doctrine. In June, 1941, the collaborationist weekly *Gringoire* attacked, in the same article, the Catholic country priests “who fight from the pulpit the Government of the Marshal and his politics” and the Protestant clergymen who deliver “strange Anglophile and De Gaullist preachments.”

Numerous sentences were passed in the Occupied Zone upon leaders of the confessional youth groups who persisted in meeting despite prohibitions. It became impossible, even in the Free Zone, to find in the public libraries or even in the bookstores the encyclicals of the Pope which condemned racism, but their text circulates from hand to hand by stealth. The most characteristic passages of these proscribed documents are reproduced in clandestine leaflets and booklets, such as the “Cahiers du témoignage Chrétien,” drawn up in common by Catholics and Protestants. On Sunday May 3, 1942, youngsters openly handed out at the entrance of the St. John's Cathedral

in Lyons, a tract entitled, "You Must Make Your Choice: Christ or Hitler."

The Vichy Government has managed to ban for good, "on account of their anticollaborationist tendencies," Catholic publications such as *Temps Nouveau* and *Esprit*. It might slyly jam the Vatican radio station, but it did not succeed in stifling the voice of the Christians of France. On the other hand, the minister, Marc Boegner, head of the Reformed Church, was among the first courageously to denounce anti-Semitic persecutions. Catholic notables like Cardinal Gerlier, Archbishop of Lyons, and the great writer Paul Claudel, former French Ambassador in Washington, associated themselves with his gesture by sending letters of sympathy to the Grand Rabbi of France. The deportation measures against Jews of foreign origin in the two zones brought public protests from the episcopacy. In a collective letter to Marshal Pétain, the Cardinals and Archbishops of the Occupied Zone asked that "the exigencies of justice and the rights of charity be respected." On August 30, in all the churches of his diocese, the Bishop of Montauban caused a pastoral letter to be read in which he said: "The anti-Semitic measures are in defiance of the dignity of the human being; they violate the most sacred rights of the individual and of the family. May God console and strengthen those who are unjustly persecuted." In another pastoral letter, Archbishop Salièges of Toulouse expressed himself thus: "There is a Christian morality; there is a human morality which imposes duties and confers rights. . . . The Jews are human beings. They are our brothers. . . . No Christian can disregard this." Cardinal Gerlier, Archbishop of Lyons, recalled at the same time "that man has inalienable rights, that family ties are sacred and the right of asylum cannot be violated." In that same city of Lyons, eight Jesuits were arrested for refusing to deliver to Pierre Laval's police several hundred Jewish children they had sheltered in their convent or hidden in friendly homes.

In deep accord with secular spiritual traditions, French intelligence refuses to burn incense before the new idols. Hitler has found sycophants in France, second-rate writers like Alphonse de Chateaubriant and Abel Bonnard. The masters of modern literature—André Gide, Paul Claudel, Paul Valéry, Georges Duhamel, Jean Giraudoux, François Mauriac—all belong to the opposition, and their silence is more eloquent than the words of Abetz's talkative friends. In universities, colleges, the public schools, professors and masters maintain the flame of the French spirit without flinching. For long months, André Philip, who is today a member of the National French Committee in London, had been able, despite the vigilance of the police, to give public lectures in the University of Lyons to demonstrate, figures in hand, that all the economic difficulties from which France is suffering are caused by the systematic looting of the Nazis.

In the Occupied Zone, the rage of the German authorities vented itself upon intellectuals in particular. Scientists, professors, writers, were thrown into concentration camps, deported to the Reich, or shot as hostages under the pretext they were De Gaullists or Bolsheviks. The staff of the Musée de l'Homme, center of anthropological research, was subjected to odious persecution. The Gestapo could not forgive these ethnologists for having proved by their works the inanity of the racist myth. Seven members of the staff of instruction of the Musée de l'Homme have been shot. One of them, Boris Wilde, French by nationalization, left, before dying, a moving letter to his wife in which he said: "I face death smiling, as at a new adventure, with regret but without remorse or fear. . . . Think of me as one alive and not dead. . . . You know how I love your parents who have become my parents. Through French such as they I have learned to know and love France, my France. Let my death be for them rather a source of pride than of sorrow. . . . My death must not become the pretext for a hatred against Germany. I have worked for France but

not against Germany. . . . If justice be rendered our memory after the war, it is enough." Here is how naturalized foreigners die for France, men Vichy now refuses to consider as Frenchmen. Three women aids of the Musée de l'Homme, Mme. Jeanne Leleu, Mme. Simoneux, and Mlle. Yvonne Oddon (who formerly had worked for several years at the Library of Congress in Washington) were deported to Germany, heads shaved and in irons, as common criminals.

If too many functionaries, in order to avoid death from starvation, had to comply with the orders of Vichy or the occupying authorities, from time to time a resounding resignation shed light on the deeper feelings that lie beneath. I will give here but one testimony, that of Professor Basdevant, legal expert of the Foreign Ministry. "I must remark," he wrote to Marshal Pétain, "that official interpretations are substituting, to Germany's profit, the right of free use and disposal for a mere right of inspection. . . . I cannot in good faith hide from myself through artifices the assistance we are lending and shall lend Germany in its military operations, nor hide the fact that this assistance makes it impossible to place France under the protection of the neutrality laws in future. . . . Honor does not allow me to accept, when giving advice, the ground chosen by your Government. . . . The situation resulting from your Government's decisions thus makes it morally impossible for me to give the Foreign Ministry the assistance I have given it for many years, and I must therefore refrain from further assistance." What Professor Basdevant dared to say aloud, numerous civil servants and officers of all ranks whisper among themselves when they feel safe from betrayal by Pierre Laval's spies. I myself heard at Vichy, in the rooms of the Hôtel du Parc above Marshal Pétain's office, many a conversation that left no doubt as to the irreducible hostility of administrative circles to the collaboration policy.

The upsurge of resistance, originating in the deep reaches of the nation, extended to the leaders of the French Parlia-

ment which in July, 1940, under threats, had resigned itself to its own abdication by voting full powers to Marshal Pétain. For more than two years, the chambers, without ever being able to gather, maintained, thanks to Vichy's good graces, a semblance of legal existence. Their presidents, vice presidents, and secretaries had offices for their use in a hotel of Chatel-Guyon. A decree published in the *Journal Officiel* ordered their dissolution as of August 31, 1942, thus wiping out the last traces of the parliamentary regime. After this decision, Jules Jeanneney, President of the Senate, and Edouard Herriot, President of the Chamber of Deputies, addressed a letter to Marshal Pétain in which they formally accused the Chief of State of dereliction to the engagements he made before the National Assembly and of exceeding his legal mandate by suppressing from official acts all references to the Republic and abolishing the principle of elective representation. "If you intend," they wrote, "to deprive the nation of the right to decide for herself her definite regime, or if without the authorization of the Parliament you try to drag France into a war against our allies, while you have yourself declared that honor forbade this, we, by this letter, protest in advance in the name of the nation's sovereignty. . . . Liberty cannot die in the country that gave it birth and from whence it spread to the whole world."

So, in farm and factory, in church and school, in the administration and even in this hotel room in which the last legitimate representatives of the people's suffrage drew up their last protest—everywhere—France's determination not to yield before the aggressor has asserted itself. But the problem is more than merely to hold firm till deliverance comes from without. It is just as much, if not more, a matter of speeding the enemy's defeat by using against him all the secret weapons an invaded people can still lay its hands upon. From passive resistance, which took place spontaneously within the heart of each citizen and in the quiet of each home, has been born little by little

an active resistance which today blankets the whole country with its net of clandestine organizations. None can reveal, of course, who are the chiefs of these groups or what are their effectives and their ramifications. By their publications, by their acts, and by their efficiency they furnish proof of their existence.

The birth of these groups was humble and their beginnings weak. Nearly everywhere, the same necessity prodded them. They had to answer the lies of enemy propaganda and denounce Vichy's treason. Several friends would gather of an evening in the home of one of their number and decide to print or type on little squares of paper several phrases, or even just several words. They were slogans like this afterwards adopted by the French radio in London: "But one enemy—the invader." Returning home, each pasted these stickers on shop windows, street lamps, bridge parapets, or even the cars of the German army of occupation. A little later, the tiny group would gather enough assurance to start a paper. There was certainly no need for big presses or rolls of paper. A toy press or a typewriter was enough. Each member would take, for instance, five copies to distribute. Those who received these papers copied them to distribute them in turn, and so on. Thus began *Valmy*. Paul Simon, *Valmy's* editor, is today in London. Its circulation reached, at certain times, several thousand copies.

There is not a town in France which could not boast of its clandestine paper or papers before the end of 1940. Little by little, cautious contacts branch out from one group to another, from one town to another, from one region to another. In this manner the great bodies of resistance were progressively shaped. They are designated mostly by the titles of their publications: *Libération*, *Combat*, *Franc-Tireur*. These are the most important ones, but there are others. In liaison with these bodies or beside them, groups of political or professional origin either reconstituted themselves or continued operating.

Union leaders built up step by step everywhere solid nuclei of resistance. The Socialist party, although torn by certain defections, has managed to forge its unity anew and reestablish close ties with its local committees. From the day of Soviet Russia's entry into the war, the Communist party, which has at all times carried on under-cover action, distinguished itself by fostering a series of attacks against German officers.

The newspapers of the resistance have now become real institutions but have to remain secret just the same. Most are put out with a really amazing regularity. Some are published simultaneously in several towns. In the face of the Gestapo and Vichy's surveillance, it is necessary to rely upon a widespread network of accomplices to achieve such results.

The occupying authorities and the spies of Pierre Laval multiplied the means of control without success. Nobody can get paper, ink, typewriters, duplicators, or printing material without administrative authorization. Nevertheless, the clandestine press continues to appear. For a long time, one of the biggest organs of resistance found shelter in the printing office of a great Paris hotel inhabited almost solely by German officers. By day, the menus of these gentlemen were put out. By night, the paper was printed. Other editors of secret publications escape the police because they have adopted—on the surface—a very favorable attitude to the regime with their occupation, the issuing of Government posters or pamphlets. Still, it is necessary to vary the type faces in order to render all comparison impossible.

Publication of the clandestine newspapers is, moreover, only one of the forms—and not the most important—of resistance. The supreme objective of the resistance mechanisms is military. It is a question of preparing a firm foundation upon which the nation may rise against the invader in a unanimous drive the day the forces of the United Nations land in France. Most of these organizations have had arms and ammunitions at hand, in safe places since the time of the debacle, or stolen

since then from German depots. One of my friends has seen a tank hidden under the hay on an isolated farm. There is not, of course, enough to equip army detachments. But it may prove enough in many a place to hold out for one day or two, cut the communications of the enemy here and there, inspire in him a general feeling of insecurity, and thus assist the first operations in the reconquest of the Continent.

From now on, the resistance organizations played an active role in the war by gathering and transmitting information on movements of the German troops, on the matériel they have, and on the results of airplane bombings. Vichy, after an order from Berlin, was obliged to decree the death penalty for the use of secret radio transmitters. From one end of France to the other, probably even through Spain and Portugal, there operates what has been called the "underground railroad" which carries to their destination messengers, fleeing prisoners, and volunteers wishing to enlist in the Fighting French forces in London. All carry bogus papers. While isolated attacks against German soldiers have practically ceased—because General de Gaulle forbade them in order to avoid useless reprisals—no week passes without acts of sabotage against communications or the matériel of the occupation army. Bombs are frequently tossed into German military establishments and the headquarters of collaborationist groups. More than one traitor has already fallen by a patriot's bullet. The leading accomplices of the enemy no longer feel secure and are escorted everywhere by bodyguards.

The fighters in the resistance organizations are perfectly aware that they run serious risks. Repression is ferocious and prisons are bulging. The courts pass sentences of five to ten years at hard labor for the mere distribution of tracts. According to trustworthy information, the number of prisoners jailed or interned in concentration camps was 300,000 for the Occupied Zone at the time Germany completed her military occupation. The number of political prisoners for the Free Zone was

said to reach 120,000. Nobody escaped mistreatment, not even wounded war veterans. In 1941, Fernand Laurent, former President of the Paris Municipal Council, was compelled to send Pierre Pucheu, Minister of the Interior, this letter: "I want you to know that my son, seriously wounded during the last war, shares at the Clermont-Ferrand prison a narrow cell in repulsive filth with fifteen fellow prisoners, among whom are eight common criminals, swindlers, or thieves. I especially want you to know—because this is your responsibility—that this wounded man, whose left kneecap was shattered by a bullet and must be taken three times a week to the military hospital for necessary care, is obliged to go on foot with his stiff leg. His wrists are in handcuffs." In a North African town, an accused prisoner, victim of a serious accident the day before his arrest, was carried before the court on a stretcher in a physical state which did not allow him to present his defense.

In the invaded departments, a single arrest on the basis of an anonymous denunciation or on mere suspicion brought the risk of inclusion in the list of hostages and of being shot upon the earliest occasion. Little is known regarding the execution of hostages, except that they have been exceedingly numerous. In most cases, the German occupation authorities merely announce that so many hostages have been put to death on such a day in reprisal for such an attack. The names of the victims are rarely published and the executioners have never dared say how they faced the supreme penalty.

However, a moving document reached London. It is the account—by an eyewitness who might well have been one of the victims—of the execution of twenty-seven hostages shot by the Germans October 22, 1941, at Chateaubriant, a little town in Brittany, with the assistance of Vichy's police.

In the Chateaubriant concentration camp, there were a little more than 400 prisoners, most of them Communists. They had been interned there for several months under the surveillance of French Gardes Mobiles. On October 20, it was learned that

a German officer had been murdered at Nantes and that, in reprisal, hostages would be selected in the Chateaubriant camp to be shot. Thus, innocent victims were going to pay with their lives for an act in which they had not taken the remotest part, an act committed while they were themselves in prison and by men whom they did not even know.

During the day, the secretary to the subprefect, a Vichy functionary, drew up with the authorities of the camp a list of two hundred names. From this document, the twenty-seven names were selected. The tragic decision was taken in Paris in the Interior Ministry, with the participation of a representative of Pierre Pucheu.

On October 22, in the early morning, the rollcall of hostages was made in the camp barracks by a lieutenant of the Vichy gendarmerie. The French uniform had never been put to such infamy. Among these twenty-seven men, besides the Communist deputy Michels, were a doctor, a student, two schoolmasters, and twenty-two workers, all poor people who depended upon their work and whose families have now been deprived of all income. The oldest was fifty-eight. The youngest was a seventeen-year-old boy, Guy Moquet, who before dying wrote to his mother: "I should have liked to live, but I hope with all my heart that my death will be of some use." They were taken away in the early afternoon, standing upright in trucks. And they were singing the "Marseillaise" and the "Chant du Départ" while crossing the town, and men stood bareheaded as they passed. The execution took place in a sand quarry where three rows of nine posts had been planted. The hostages refused to have their eyes veiled and their hands bound. They died free men as they had lived. There were three salvos at five-minute intervals. The following Sunday, more than 5,000 people passed the quarry, most of them dropping flowers where the men had fallen.

The martyrs of Fighting France will be avenged by its heroes. Six months after the executions of Chateaubriant,

other Frenchmen fell in Brittany with weapons in hand. When, during the night of March 27, the British commandos began to disembark upon the quays of Saint-Nazaire, the population rushed spontaneously into the streets to attack the Germans. One would scarcely have believed there could still remain in a single town of France, after twenty-one months of police home searches and denunciations, so many hidden revolvers and pistols. The commandos withdrew after several hours, once the British destroyer *Campbelltown* had fulfilled its mission by being blown up in the gates of the drydock. But numerous English detachments could not be reembarked. For three days, the population continued to fight furiously at their side against the Germans, in the streets, in the cafés, in the houses, while delayed action mines set by the commandos were exploding everywhere.

Although this was not the aim of the operation, proof was given that the French were ready to join their liberators the day the Continent is invaded. Saint-Nazaire has proved it with five hundred dead.

The French people have thus disavowed by their acts those who would have them bear the dishonor of capitulation. At the same time, the French have enthusiastically rallied to General de Gaulle, who was the first to proclaim that France was always at war. All those among us who were able in one way or another to keep contact with the Occupied Zone know there is no room for doubt on this point. The workers and the peasants of France are simple and direct at heart: they know how to recognize a leader when they have the opportunity to find one. The enemy himself is obliged to testify to this: "A great part of the public," Radio-Paris recently recognized, "is for De Gaulle and his followers: first of all, because they represent the French tradition actively and not as a mere colored poster, but also because they represent the hope for liberty." The pro-Hitler weekly *Je Suis Partout* has been also obliged to confess that "De Gaullism has filtered everywhere, into the civilian ad-

ministration, among the teachers, and even in the active army." In July, 1942, a Swiss newspaper thus summed up the situation: "The De Gaullists have their services for information and recruiting in the Occupied and Free zones. The systematic persecution of the De Gaullists will soon become more severe and more methodical. Laval has given orders to the French police, not only to find all the centers of De Gaullist propaganda and arrest all the suspects as has been done up to now, but also to collaborate with the German police. But these measures only succeed in strengthening the unanimous feeling of sympathy which exists in France for the movement of General de Gaulle."

Several months ago, the three main organizations of internal resistance, "Libération," "Combat," and "Franc-Tireur," after setting up a central committee for coordination, managed to establish direct relations with General de Gaulle. They sent emissaries who reached an agreement with him on three principles of action: "Total opposition to Vichy, attachment to the Republican form of the State, unity of internal and external resistance." This manifesto, drawn up jointly, was published last June in the underground papers of France. As Adrien Tixier, Delegate of the French National Committee in the United States, has said: "It is a new national unity which was shaped in suffering."

Before this union had been expressed in a single document, *Franc-Tireur* declared last March: "We are with all our heart with General de Gaulle as are all the French who cast aside the equivocal Vichy dictatorship." In March *Combat* also stated: "The immense majority of public opinion has, from the first day, saluted in General de Gaulle the man who has saved France's honor and personified the hope of the country. The whole of France listens each night to the spokesman of the Free French forces. It contemplates with gratitude the sacrifices of its soldiers, *our* soldiers, who fight for deliverance." On April

25, *Libération* said in turn: "France, firm in its unity, enthusiastic in its passion, looks forward as one toward De Gaulle."

On July 30, André Philip, who arrived in England after personally leading one of the resistance organizations, declared over the radio: "My presence in London signifies that we recognize General de Gaulle as our political and military chief. He has become, in the eyes of the world, the symbol of the national soul. In him are personified today the aspirations of millions of Frenchmen."

Are other testimonies needed? Here is the message sent May 1, 1942, by the French unionists to the International Federation of Syndicalists: "Our nation is always at war. Our representative, that of the people of France, General de Gaulle, is fighting beside the Allies. While his army is still small, a great imprisoned army supports him in France, and the enemy will not always have enough chains at hand to prevent it from fighting." And here is the order of the day adopted in January, 1942, by the Comité d'Action Socialiste in the Occupied Zone: "Having taken cognizance of the formal and reiterated declarations by General de Gaulle, we will give our most sincere support to any government set up or designated by him."

From now on, moreover, it was clear that the French population willingly obeyed General de Gaulle while refusing to follow Vichy's orders. The demonstrations of July 14, 1942, in the bigger towns of the Free Zone proved this forcefully. Obeying the call of the French National Committee and the resistance organizations homes were bedecked with flags everywhere, everywhere processions were started and the crowd gathered, singing the "Marseillaise," at the precise hour and in the precise spots assigned in the messages broadcast eight days before by the London French radio.

In September, 1942, there arrived simultaneously in London Pierre Brossolette, well known Socialist militant, a frequent spokesman on the French radio before June, 1940, and

Charles Vallin, Paris Deputy, former Vice President of the Croix de Feu which was violently opposed to the Front Populaire. Vallin declared that, if a free plebiscite were held with secret ballots and complete freedom of voting, 90 per cent of the French would pronounce themselves in favor of General de Gaulle. "A new France is born," says Brossolette. "There are no longer Fascists or Bolsheviks. There are only Frenchmen fighting for their deliverance. National unity has been rebuilt around General de Gaulle."

The French soldiers, airmen, and sailors who, in June, 1940, answered General de Gaulle's appeal have accomplished a heroic act of faith in the destiny of France and the final victory of liberty. Some were already in Great Britain, évacués from Norway or Dunkirk. They could, as many of their friends did, have succumbed to the temptation to abandon the struggle and return home to await, free from all risk, happier days. They could have allowed themselves to be seduced by the mirage of Marshal Pétain's appeals, imagining that their duty was to take up, in an enslaved France, their former peacetime job. They did not wish this. They preferred honor to surrender. Others left from France or from North Africa, on the last Allied boats. They could neither warn their close relatives nor know how their families could live and protect themselves against Nazi vengeance. Others, in the months that followed, escaped as best they could, risking their lives to elude the surveillance of the Germans or Vichy police. Some crossed the Channel in small craft, living several days without water or food. Many crossed the Pyrenees and Spain on foot, walking at night, seeking shelter after shelter in order not to fall into the hands of the Falangist militia. Still others escaped from prisoners' camps in Germany. Colonials have toiled through the equatorial bush to reach their comrades of the English territories or Free French Africa. Each has his own story different from that of his friends. Never has more ingenuity or audacity been displayed in accomplishing a sacred mission which the

authorities—a Marshal of France and a former Generalissimo—had branded with the name of treason. Never have fighting men better deserved the title of volunteers.

The sacrifices they have willingly undergone for the honor of France have served the United Nations' cause well. Their example has prompted vast French overseas territories to break with Vichy. These territories occupy, on the map of the world, strategical positions of the first order. Through these lands, the United States links two of the main battle fronts. The Egypt and Libyan road passes through Gabon, the Cameroons, the Congo, and Tchad. The Australian and New Guinea route traverses the French archipelagoes of the southwestern Pacific. Had these distant lands not rallied to Fighting France spontaneously, it would have been necessary sooner or later to take them by force, like Syria and Madagascar. Who could fail to see that victory would be closer if Dakar and Casablanca, Algiers and Tunis, decided to follow the example of Brazzaville and Nouméa?

Maritime transport is just as decisive in this war as mastery of the globe's great communications routes. The French who have wanted to pursue the combat have brought with them a quarter of France's merchant marine. In September, 1941, the flag with the "Cross of Lorraine" was flown by 125 steamships totaling 600,000 tons. From the armistice to September, 1941, 24 other boats totaling 110,000 tons have been sunk by the enemy. Since then the merchant fleet of Fighting France every month has transported approximately 100,000 tons of war material and various kinds of merchandise for the Allies.

Thanks to General de Gaulle, the armistice was never the total surrender Hitler and Pétain desired. After June, 1940, there were always French territories which refused to submit to control by the German armistice commissions, there were always French ships to navigate the seas without Wiesbaden's permission, and, especially, there were always French soldiers, sailors, and aviators to strike at the invader with their weapons.

At no time has the fight ceased between France and her enemies.

On the very day of the armistice, French warships which declared their solidarity with Free France by radio continued their operations without interruption. Several days later, French planes took part in bombings of Germany together with R.A.F. squadrons. On August 15, 1940, the first "French Legion," composed of volunteers who escaped from Syria, paraded in the streets of Cairo before joining the British troops mounting guard in front of Italian advance posts at the Libya border.

Numerous contingents from the African colonies reinforced them in the autumn.

Thus, on December 9, 1940, General Wavell gave the signal for the first desert offensive and the French cooperated in the capture of Sidi Barrani. On December 11, they stormed a strong position south of Solum. The following month, they distinguished themselves in the taking of Bardia and Tobruk.

In the meantime, motorized detachments from Tchad under command of Colonel d'Ornano, who was killed while leading them, carried out daring raids on the Italian posts of southern Libya, at Murzuk, and at Gatrún in the Fezzan region where they destroyed an airport and planes. It was necessary, to accomplish this, to cover 1,200 miles of desert country in shriveling heat, advancing at times on sand or rocky trails with no possibility of securing supplies on the way.

This exploit was repeated in March. Other troops, also from Tchad but under the orders of Colonel Leclerc, stormed the Kufra Oasis where they took several hundred prisoners. To grasp the prodigious difficulties of this operation, one must read the article by Lieutenant Richard de Roussy de Salles on "Fighting France's Army" in the French New York weekly *Pour La Victoire* (September 5, 1942). Ten years earlier, Italian Marshal Graziani had managed to take Kufra only after gathering a real expeditionary corps of 20 planes, 3,000 trucks, armored cars, guns, and 7,000 camels. At that time,

moreover, the oasis was defended only by a few hundred Arabs armed with old muskets. Graziani, however, as a reward for this feat of arms had made sure that Mussolini would bestow upon him the title of "King of the Desert." After 1931, the Italians had built at Kufra a real fort manned by three large detachments with artillery, anti-aircraft machine guns, and modern anti-tank guns. A handful of Frenchmen with one 75-millimeter gun made them capitulate after a ten-day siege.

From January to April, 1941, the French troops helped in the conquest of Eritrea. They fought brilliantly at Kub-Kub, Keren, Asmara, and Massaua, and alone they took some 4,000 prisoners. The operations were resumed in November for the liberation of Abyssinia. The capture of Gondar, which marked the end of that campaign, was carried out with the assistance of a French battalion of colonial infantry.

In June and July, the soldiers of Free France were faced with the painful duty of fighting in Syria against compatriots bemused by the lies of Vichy. It was necessary, even at that price, to erase Admiral Darlan's treachery which allowed the Germans to use the air bases of the Near East. After the Saint-Jean d'Acre armistice, thousands of Vichy troops joined General de Gaulle's forces. In August, de Gaulle was in a position to announce that his land army totaled more than 60,000 men.

Syria became, from then on, the great French military center in the Near East. During the 1941-1942 winter, a French division equipped in the Levant was engaged in Libya under General de Larminat, while the motorized Tchad forces were carrying out new raids in the southern regions.

During these operations, the value of the French troops was shown by numerous acts of heroism. Lieutenant Colonel Pijaud, commanding the "Lorraine" squadron of bombers, lost his life in giving a striking example of the will to fight among the soldiers of General de Gaulle. On December 20, 1941, shot down by a Messerschmitt, he managed to land his flaming plane on the sand. But, suffering severe burns and practically

blind, he was captured by the Italians who took him to a hospital at Derna. It was not long before he escaped with two British officers. The three fugitives walked for four days in the desert. A British patrol finally discovered them in a recess where they lay exhausted. Lieutenant Colonel Pijaud had suffered frightful hardships without a word but his wounds had reopened and infection set in. He died in January in a hospital at Alexandria.

On May 28, 1942, when Marshal Rommel launched the attack that was to carry him to Tobruk, a French brigade commanded by an Alsatian, General Joseph Pierre Koenig, occupied advanced positions in the Bir-el-Hacheim region at the southern extremity of the minefields which separated the two armies. On the first day, this brigade smashed several tank attacks. The Italian group which had clashed with it had to be immediately withdrawn from the front. For the first time since June, 1940, German and Frenchman were face to face alone. Until May 31, the light units of General Koenig harassed without a let-up two German armored divisions striving to break through toward the east. Then, with the support of British elements, the French rushed forward to close the gap opened by the enemy in the minefields between Bir-el-Hacheim and Gazala. During a single counterattack, they destroyed 45 tanks and took several hundred prisoners. Encircled for three days, Koenig obstinately refused to surrender and threw back all assaults. "Yours is an example for all of us," General Ritchie radioed to him. One of the French battalions even wedged behind the German lines to smash a refueling center and free 800 Hindus. This battalion finally withdrew on the Bir-el-Hacheim plateau with the remnants of the Koenig brigade. In the days that followed, Rommel made furious efforts to end the resistance of the French. Despite his crushing superiority in both numbers and matériel, despite the use of Stukas, he could neither dislodge them nor oblige them to surrender. Approaches to the French lines had taken

on the aspect of a cemetery for tanks. On June 10, in less than two hours, the Germans lost 37 tanks. It was only on the night of June 10 to 11, after a formal order from General Ritchie, that Koenig executed an orderly withdrawal without ceasing to fight and taking along his artillery and his wounded. Rommel, who had counted on taking Bir-el-Hacheim in two days, had been held in check for 15 days by the stubborn resistance of 4,000 men. The general development of his offensive was delayed to a comparable extent. If it were not possible to prevent the fall of Tobruk, General Ritchie at least had the time, thanks to Bir-el-Hacheim, to reorganize his armies in strong positions before Alexandria.

The June 14 communiqué of the Allied General Staff in the Middle East declared: "The United Nations have contracted a heavy debt of gratitude and admiration toward the first Free French brigade and toward its valiant chief, General Koenig." In a brief message, General de Gaulle had expressed on June 10 the unanimous sentiment of the French: "General Koenig, you must know and tell your troops that the whole of France is looking upon you and that you are her pride."

With the offhand bravery which is one of the traditions of the French army, the Bir-el-Hacheim Legionnaires had retained their white "kepis" while under the enemy's fire. In the same way, the French sailors who took part in the Dieppe raid of August 19 refused, upon disembarking, to take off their berets with the red pompons or the bands, sewn upon their shoulders, bearing the word "France." They preferred death to not being recognized. From such men, one can ask anything.

Several weeks after Bir-el-Hacheim, the French National Committee decided that the Free French movement would assume the name of "Fighting France." This decision was made public in London July 14—Bastille Day. This is "merely talk," some said. But words appear negligible only to those who attach no importance to the sentiments the words express. The

words "Fighting France" affirm our deep faith in the indivisible unity of the country. There is an enslaved France that suffers and hopes. There is a free France which upholds the honor of our military tradition. Both are engaged in the same struggle till the day of liberation. Together they form Fighting France.

We are still far from the final goal but we can be proud of the road we have covered. As General de Gaulle said June 18, 1942—two years, day for day, after his first call to arms: "We have taken the steepest but also the cleverest path: the straight road. We have never conceded that France had withdrawn from the fight." The Fighting French have remained faithful to the decision freely taken on March 28, 1940, by the legitimate Government of the nation, with the approval of Parliament, not to conclude any armistice or separate peace except with the previous agreement of our allies. The men who gave up and placed their dictatorship under the protection of the enemy "are in error and have betrayed their duty." "For us," General de Gaulle has also said, "it is not only our right but our duty, both to fight the enemy wherever we can contact him, and also to bring back into the war all the French lands and forces."

Through his attitude in June, 1940, through the enthusiastic adherence to his cause by the volunteers and the underground organizations which lead the resistance on France's soil, General de Gaulle became the legitimate trustee of the liberties and the traditions of France. This gave him the right to address the world as the spokesman for his compatriots. Vichy was not France. Vichy was a mere phase in the Hitler adventure. The history of France has for over two years been written by those executed in Chateaubriant, by the insurgents of Saint-Nazaire, and by the defenders of Bir-el-Hacheim. Nothing would be more unjust than to blame the people, of whom these heroes are the authentic representatives, for the infamy and the crimes of a handful of traitors who would never

have managed to exercise any power in France without the connivance of the enemy.

Nothing would be more unjust, also, than to lay upon the French people the responsibility for a defeat whose causes are shared in common by all the nations today united. If the lack of foresight, the lack of preparedness, and the "appeasement policy" had in our country more serious consequences than anywhere else—and the Vichy regime was just one of these consequences—it was because France occupied the advanced trenches on the front of freedom. Her sacrifice allowed others to take breath and to arm before it grew too late.

Our allies, our brothers-in-arms, have understood this. We have faith in their word. France, which has never ratified the capitulation, which has never been absent from the battlefields, will be present in the camp of the free nations on the day of victory.

If some Frenchmen have behaved as traitors, if others misplaced their confidence, the immense majority have continued from the beginning to consider Germany as the enemy of France, and France as the ally of all the nations warring against Germany. The sacrifices willingly undergone during the two world wars for the common cause, the sufferings under German domination, the spirit of resistance which animated the population of the Occupied Zone, give the French people the right to contribute, with all the forces they retain, to the final victory of the United Nations. The French do not want to finish the war as captives awaiting liberation, but as fighting men at the side of their comrades in arms. As Walter Lippmann has so well said, "Only that pride can heal the wounds of France."

Conclusion

With the launching of the Allied offensive in North Africa, in November, 1942, the war entered a new phase. The valiant British Eighth Army drove Rommel out of Egypt, pursuing his routed troops across Libya. Powerful American forces, supported by British naval and air strength, landed at numerous points along the coasts of Algeria and Morocco. Accomplished with all the suddenness of the German invasion of Norway in April, 1940, and even broader in scope, the operation was full of meaning: the initiative no longer belonged to Hitler.

The hour for which we had been waiting and hoping through two long years had finally come. The United Nations were taking control of French North Africa. It meant the return of Algeria to the war, Algeria which is an integral part of the French Republic. It was the return of Tunis and Morocco, indissolubly linked to the protective power which gave them order, peace, and prosperity. It was the first step toward the liberation of France and the reconquest of the Continent.

President Roosevelt addressed, in French, a stirring message to France ending with this heartfelt appeal: "Long live eternal France!" General Eisenhower, the American Commander in Chief, proclaimed: "We come to you as friends to wage war against your enemies. . . . We count on your friendship and we ask your aid." For its part, the British Government declared that it had but one desire, "to hasten the day when Frenchmen everywhere will join together to restore the independence and greatness of France."

What was the response of the French?

"Help our allies! Join with them without reserve! France which fights calls upon you." That was the call from General de Gaulle in London on the afternoon of November 8. It was no partisan speaking but, in the words of the *New York Times*, "the real leader of France in this hour of crisis." "Do not be concerned with names or formulae," he added. "One thing alone counts—the welfare of our country. . . . All those who have the courage to rise again, despite the enemy and treason, are welcomed beforehand, received and acclaimed by all the fighting French."

From Algeria one other French voice was raised. It was that of General Giraud, the respected and admired leader who, in 1930 and 1934, along with General Catroux, pacified the south of Morocco after a series of brilliantly executed operations. "I again assume among you my place in battle. We have but one love—France; and one goal—victory. Remember that the African army carries in its hands the destinies of France."

Thus, in the early hours of November 8, the situation was perfectly clear for all the French who were aware of their duty toward their country. Through the appeal of General de Gaulle who never ceased the battle against Germany, through the appeal of General Giraud whose escape from the fortress of Königstein the previous spring had revived so many hopes, honor, interest, reason called the French to assume anew their place in the ranks of the soldiers of freedom.

What was Vichy doing? And those who, for two years, through Vichy, had truckled to the orders of the invader?

To the personal appeal made to him by President Roosevelt, Marshal Pétain responded in these bitter words: "I read your message. In it you invoked a pretext which nothing justifies. You accuse your enemies of intentions which have never been translated into acts. I have always declared that we would defend our empire if it were attacked . . . You know I will keep my word. . . . We have been attacked. We will defend ourselves. That is the order which I give."

North Africa, however, did not lack French officers and soldiers who wanted to join the troops of the United States. First among them was General Bethouard, the hero of Narvik. In a number of places these men rebelled, but on the whole Pétain's orders were carried out. Everywhere the landing forces met resistance, more or less serious, more or less sustained. Why? Because in two years the lying propaganda of Vichy—by urging blind faith in one man, Pétain—had succeeded in choking off the notion of national interest which had manifested itself in such a loud and clear tone in North Africa in June, 1940. Thus it was that the accomplices of Germany were able to turn against our allies the weapons that the immense majority of Frenchmen in Morocco, Algiers, and Tunisia had longed, two years before, to use against our enemies.

On the evening of November 8 Pierre Laval broke diplomatic relations with the United States. "No act of Hitler nor any of his puppets," replied President Roosevelt, "can sever relations between the American people and the people of France."

Algiers, Oran, Casablanca capitulated one after another. Allied troops also occupied Rabat, where their first gesture was to pay tribute to the memory of Marshal Lyautey. In Algiers, where the resistance lasted only a few hours, the terms of the surrender were accepted by Admiral Darlan. An official communiqué made clear that the Commander in Chief of Vichy's land, sea, and air forces was "the guest" of an American general, who treated him "with the respect and dignity due an officer of his rank." This information was hardly known when Marshal Pétain, without leaving Vichy, declared that he would assume command: "I have given the order to resist; I maintain this order."

On the morning of November 11, Hitler decided to invade the Free Zone and take over the Mediterranean ports. German columns crossed the demarcation line and moved rapidly toward their objectives. The Italians occupied Nice and Chambéry. The enemy established himself throughout the country,

thereby rendering the sufferings of the French people still more acute. More than ever, then, must we strive for the victory that will liberate France, redoubling our efforts to hasten its advent.

Upon this twenty-fourth anniversary of the victorious 1918 armistice, the regime established by the other armistice of June, 1940, collapsed completely. "I protest solemnly against these decisions which are not in accordance with the armistice conventions," Pétain declared to General von Rundstedt. But the marching Germans and Italians met with no actual resistance.

Up to its last hour Vichy thus persisted in the policy it had followed for over two years. The invader had violated the armistice terms a hundred times. But these violations were never considered as a break. Vichy kept to the text of the Re-thondes convention which asserted that Germany alone could denounce the armistice. Vichy, which delivered Indo-China to the Japanese and the Syrian airports to the Germans without a fight—Vichy, which defended Syria by arms, as well as Madagascar and North Africa, against the Allies—merely opposed a protest against the total occupation of France, not seeing there a good enough reason to declare itself once more at war with the Axis. Here terminated the history of Vichy. It ended, as it began, in abdication and dishonor.

The personal adventures of the men of Vichy were not necessarily also over. But, in truth, they matter little except in relation to the great battle against the forces of the Axis. Should some men of Vichy seize an opportunity to offer late cooperation to the cause of the United Nations—that is to France's cause—it can neither add nor subtract anything to what the Vichy regime was from its origin to its end.

It cannot, above all, modify our conception of duty and honor. "We have selected the straight path," declared General de Gaulle on June 18, 1942. It is the only path which leads to the final goal—victory. The struggle continues.

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